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Wildlife and Related Natural Resources

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FRONT COVER: Bobwhite Quail, by Durant Ball, Newport News.
(for details on this print, see page 21).

Editorial

COMPUTER CONSERVATION

February is the month wildlife managers have to make hard decisions about seasons and regulations to be tested nine months hence.

The day when we can punch a button and get a game survey or a suggested season from a computer might not be as far off as we think. Electronic technology is beginning to revolutionize the natural resources field just as it has many other facets of our lives. Scanners aboard the Earth Resources Technology Satellite (ERTS) can differentiate between types of vegetation, polluted and unpolluted water, sick and healthy trees, and perform many other unbelievable feats. This kind of data supplemented by high altitude photography on special films and on the ground data can all be fed into a computer for analysis. At the same time data from the hunting season can be fed in to indicate hunter success and effects of different seasons. (Oct. '76 V.W.).

In handling vast amounts of data at one time the computer has it all over the human brain. Once it is loaded with all available information you can tell the

computer to pinpoint areas with any number of special characteristics. This has been applied widely in planning and recently to classifying wildlife habitat.

The Craighead Brothers recently used a computer to pinpoint grizzly bear habitat in Montana. On-the-ground surveys established the bears' requirements in terms of vegetation, altitude, slope, water, etc. Each of these was identified on a series of maps, many from high altitude scanners, and fed into a computer. Known good bear habitat areas were marked and the computer instructed to pick out all other similar areas. It did so instantaneously and produced a bear habitat map. Thus managers now know where the bears are or should be.

Similar maps could be produced for all wildlife species given proper knowledge of the animals' requirements. Such could be of immense value in determining habitat for endangered species, evaluating the effects of development, and for siting manufacturing plants, residential areas, wildlife areas and parks. It won't do the wildlife manager's work for him but it will make his job easier and a lot more effective. —HLG

Letters

GET OFF THE ROAD!

I read with great interest in the February issue three letters about what we call pot or road hunters.

It is an outright shame how these people are allowed to operate. Hunting in the roads should be stopped wherever it is done. If you know, please tell me why don't our police and wardens enforce this law.

Robert E. Burton
Ettrick

Unless a county or city has adopted an ordinance against hunting from public roads it is legal. An officer can only arrest persons he observes shooting from the roadway. —Ed.

IF THE SHOE FITS

After reading your editorial "The Outdoor Mystique" (Dec. 1975) and a letter concerning it "Aims Low" (March 1976) I find I tend to disagree with both. I don't think CBS's "Guns of Autumn" was meant to portray hunting as cruel and unnecessary or to destroy the code of the hunter but to show the "bad" side of hunting as The American Sportsman and other TV series have showed us the "good" side of hunting. Sure they picked bad examples but that was their point. As for the letter, I think they didn't subject the hunter to any injustice, distortion or lies, but just showed that some people do hunt like this. How many non-hunters really believe that all

hunters are like these few examples CBS used. One trip to the woods with a hunting buddy or a simple walk to the drugstore magazine rack would prove this wrong. So if "Guns of Autumn" is wrong for showing only the undecent and vicious side of hunting then the American Sportsman is wrong for showing only the good sportsman-like side of hunting.

Terrence Roum
Winchester

ROBIN WHITE-BREAST

In March while I was watching the birds at the feeders in the back yard, a white bird lighted on the grass. It was only about 30 feet away, and after watching its hopping and searching for insects, I determined it was a robin. The forebreast was very white, a quarter-sized, robin-red spot at its legs. At the shoulders was a quarter-sized, lead-colored spot and another at the root of the tail.

I am 77 years old, and never saw one before.

J. A. Robinson
Warrenton

KEEP THOSE CARDS AND LETTERS COMING

I would like to thank all of the staff members of *Virginia Wildlife* for publishing such a wonderful magazine. I love the outdoors, love to hunt and fish. My children find this magazine very educational.

James E. Eagle

For about ten years now, I have enjoyed hunting on several of the wildlife management areas, particularly Powhatan. However, in the past couple of years, I have seen a problem develop which, in my opinion, has reached dangerous proportions. That is the practice of indiscriminate target shooting by hunters in and around parking areas of these public lands. It seems to be a tradition for hunters to gather at lunch time to socialize and target shoot, which is all well and good. However, for an unsuspecting hunter approaching a parking area from the woods, there is a real danger of being shot by a round aimed at a tin can. Not only is uncontrolled target shooting dangerous, but the unnecessary noise makes game more wary and harder to see. I think the Commission should recognize this problem and prohibit target shooting on its lands.

Robert I. Young
Richmond

KNOCK, KNOCK

As a subscriber to *Virginia Wildlife*, I thought the following would be of interest to bird lovers. I am happy that there are a pair of Pileated or ivory-billed woodpeckers here where I live near Kerr Lake. They have beautiful plumage and are very shy.

Garland Hutcheson
Boydton

They are no doubt Pileated Woodpeckers. Ivory bills would have extensive white on back and shoulders. —Ed.



BIRDS IN GRAY FLANNEL SUITS

Drab Little Birds are Fun to Watch

By JANE GRAHAM

Are you one of the people who thinks gray is a pretty color? If so, come with me for a walk down to the bird feeder. Look closely now, so you won't miss the first flitting of the titmice and chickadees. They may be among the smallest of the visitors to the feeder, but they are the most persistent too.

The tufted titmouse is my favorite advocate of gray as a lively color. His is a soft gray, the color of an overcast November afternoon. His breast is a little lighter, like the sun about to break through the winter sky. His costume is complimented by rusty flanks and a tufted crest that works animatedly as he flits about in his search for food.

Insects are the staple of the titmice's diet, but they love sunflower seed from the feeder. Their habit of eating insects throughout the winter makes them one of man's best friends in the fight against these pests. Their way of eating sunflower seed makes them one of the most interesting visitors to the birdfeeder. The little titmouse, about six-inches long, will light on the feeder, his beady little eyes sparkling. He quickly snatches a sunflower seed and flies to a nearby twig where he holds it against the twig and uses his beak to tear off the hull and get the goody inside.

While you are watching the titmice, their little cousin, the chickadee is likely to slip in for his share of the feast. You'll find the chickadee more jaunty in his plumage than the titmouse. He's easy to recognize with his solid black cap and fringed black bib. These are separated by white cheeks. His back is gray and he

sports a white chest, buff sides and wings edged in white, altogether a cheery sight on a winter day.

The bird feeder is not the only place you'll find the titmice and chickadees feeding together. They range through the winter woods with a number of other gray, insect-eating friends, lifting spiders, cocoons and other bugs from the sleeping forest. The search party is likely to have several nuthatches, some kinglets and woodpeckers as members.

The nuthatch is the acrobat of the troop. Watch that white-breasted nuthatch run down the trunk of an oak tree and catch an acorn. He can hang upside down from a branch too.

The nuthatch's suit is done in a subtle range of grays, blacks and whites. His head is black above a white face and breast. His soft gray back has a suggestion of blue and his wings are feathered in black and white. You can recognize him by his short neck, broad shoulders, and beady eyes. Like other friends we have met, the nuthatch's natural foods are insects and their eggs. He also likes acorns and loves to visit the birdfeeder for a snack of sunflower seeds and suet. The nuthatch plans for a rainy day, coming again and again to the feeder for seeds and nuts to save for bad weather.

One of the tiniest visitors you will see is the kinglet. He is just over four inches long, so look closely. These little mites travel with their relatives in search of insects. If you are lucky, you may even spot two different species. The ruby-crowned kinglet's outstanding characteristic is his red crown patch. He has an olive back, buffy-gray undersides, broken white eye rings, pale wing bars and a stubby tail.

The golden-crowned kinglet may also be a visitor to the feeder. He resembles the ruby-crowned, having an olive gray back with whitish underparts. The golden crowned kinglet has black head stripes and white eye stripes. The male is distinguished by an orange crown patch. The female has a yellow one.

The varying shades of gray that mark the titmice, the chickades, nuthatches and kinglets is complimented by the black and white suits of their comrades in the winter woods, the woodpeckers. These birds, especially the downy and hairy woodpeckers, travel in the colonies of insect fighters during the winter months.

While on your visit to the bird feeder, you will probably meet an immigrant from the Old World, the weaver finch. This little gray and brown bird is better known in North America as the English sparrow or the house sparrow. It is usually disliked by Americans.

Despite his detractors, the house sparrow makes a lively gray addition to the bird feeder with his constant squabbling and twittering. Two habits of the English Sparrows near my house endear them to me. Every winter during the first cold spell, the resident flock lights in the mulberry tree above my birdfeeder, demanding a handout. It is as sure a sign of winter as the leaves falling from the trees. And in the summer he wins my gardener's heart by snatching Japanese beetles from rose bushes. That is enough to earn him a place at my feeder, if not in heaven itself.

The male house finch has a gray crown, chestnut nape with black bib and white cheeks. His back is streaked brown to give him a British tweed look. The female has a brown crown, whitish underparts, light eye stripes and the streaked back that looks so much like many native American sparrows.

The slate-colored junco is a familiar visitor to the winter feeder and is an exception to the stripes most of his sparrow family wears. The slate-colored junco hops about in a suit of Quaker gray and white. His back is gray and he has gray underparts and breast, a round white belly and white tail edges. He often appears at the feeder with the first snow.

Gray is the color of the feeder bully, the mockingbird, who enjoys driving the smaller birds away. The mockingbird, despite his fussiness, adds an elegant touch to the winter scene as he lands on the feeder in a swirl of light gray accented with white. Larger than most of the other visitors, the mocker spends much of his time driving the other birds away.

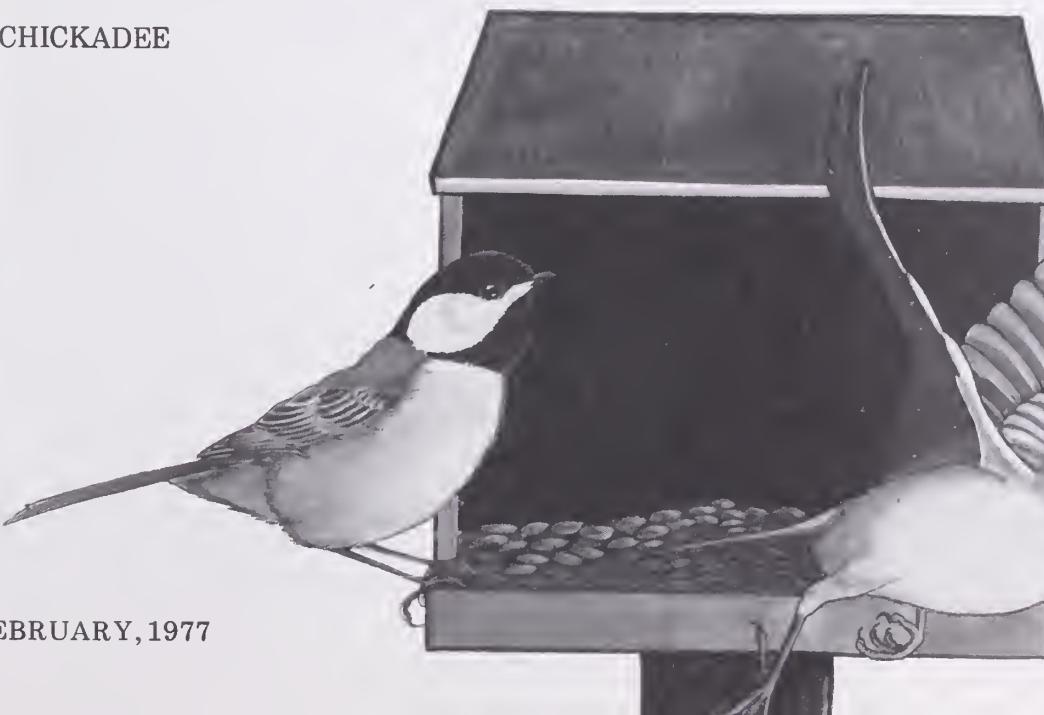
You may see a dove visiting the feeder, if your luck holds. The mourning dove is clad in soft, delicate shades of iridescent gray. The two sexes look almost alike, but the male can be identified by a dark earspot. The dove only visits the feeder occasionally, if he lives where there is plenty of grain and seeds to eat. The dove is considered both a game and a song bird, depending on who is talking dove.

The female redbird or cardinal is another lively gray bird who often calls at the bird feeder. While her mate is garbed in splendid red, Mrs. Cardinal is dressed in muted gray with touches of red and pink which I find just as pleasing to the eye as her mate's bright splendor.

Seeds and grain on the ground below the feeder are likely to attract some bobwhite for us to observe. This game bird is clad in mottled browns and grays which provide it with protection in its search for food. The quail is a hen-like bird with short stubby tail and wings.

When you are tempted to think of gray as a dull color, remember these lively little feathered beings who inhabit our woodlands and call at our birdfeeders.

CHICKADEE



TUFTED TITMOUSE



Belle, working methodically back and forth across the field of golden brown broom sedge, suddenly froze. It wasn't a classical point - nothing fancy enough to win a field trial, but Belle wasn't a show dog. She was a steady, mature English setter, a true southern belle who in her short lifetime found more than her share of birds.

But this point was different. Her work was normally backed up by veteran bird hunters, crack wing-shots who seldom failed to collect doubles; now a skinny farm boy, alone and apprehensive, edged in on her point. Clenched tightly in his trembling hands was his Dad's trusty old double; a gun that, like Belle, bore the signs of many successful hunts. But if Belle had any doubts about the youngster's ability, she didn't reveal them. Just the boy was scared.

The roar of the covey rise rocked him back on his heels. Somehow he got the gun to his shoulder, and out there above the waving broom sedge, a buzzing quail seemed to ride the muzzles of the short twin barrels. The old scattergun barked - just once. He didn't remember pulling the trigger, but a puff of feathers and a tumbling bobwhite told him he had collected his first quail. He stood dazed. Smoke curled from the muzzle of the gun, and the sweet smell of gunpowder hung heavy in the November air. Belle raced to claim the downed bird.

That simple drama in the neglected Virginia field occurred forty years ago - and in the process I became an impossibly addicted bird hunter. I was introduced to bird hunting in the mid-1930's. Those were depression years in the Old Dominion, but the economic hard times were limited to the human race. The quail populations flourished. Those slim economic years are now known as the golden years of quail hunting. It was the era of the family homestead and patch farming, a system of farming that saw a



Reflections of a Quail Hunter

steady rotation of crops -- corn, wheat and hay. It produced near perfect quail habitat, and the harvesting methods of the day left plenty of food for bobwhite. I consider myself lucky to have been born early enough to sample the tail end of those rich hunting years. Fading memories of those full years have carried me through many slim seasons.

Quail biologists tell us there were birds in America before the coming of the white man. The crude agricultural efforts of the Indians, small

clearings in the forests and weedy river bottoms apparently supported modest populations of bobwhites. Vast forests do not favor the bobwhite however, and it was not until early settlers began clearing forests for crops and cabins that the bobwhite emerged from mere existence to mushrooming populations that made quail hunting America's most loved form of wingshooting.

Rural Virginia remained a near perfect home for the bobwhite until the post World War II years when changes in land use and farming

methods began to rob him of his excellent habitat. Still, the adaptable bobwhite has adjusted and continues to flourish - but the bird has changed. The modern bobwhite is a wiser bird. He has to be to survive. This is nature's way of balancing things.

My earliest quail hunting was done almost completely in the fields. We rarely hunted the woods and thickets in those days. There was no need to. Quail were predictable. A hunter, familiar with the country, could tell you where to find a covey in a given field. And the dogs were equally well informed. Today however, most coveys located in the open fields tend to flush wild.

Much of my old quail hunting country has been converted from patch farming to grass and cattle farming, a change not in the best interests of bobwhite. Strangely though, many of those old coveys, the ones I knew in the 1930's, still live in much the same general area. Their habits are different. They no longer frequent the fields because there is nothing there to attract them. They now live in the edges, the thickets and the deep woods. Gone are the scattered grains of wheat, the fox grass, and the lespedeza and like crops. The hardy and adaptable quail lives well on acorns, berries, weed seeds, insects, and a wide variety of other food. Abandoned fields, rapidly growing up in cedars and pines, support a few birds, but generally I find it necessary to ignore the modern, well-kept hayfield.

Hunting the single birds has long been the very heart of quail hunting. Even the old timers looked to the singles shooting to fill their limits. Back in the golden years it was not uncommon to flush a big covey of birds and watch the singles settle down on the far side of the field, offering additional open shooting. Such an occurrence is rare anymore. The modern quail lives, eats, and plays close to good escape cover - and he seeks it quickly. An experienced hunter can usually tell the route a flushed covey will take by

noting the direction of the nearest cover - woods, thickets or swamp. The hunter who understands the modern quail's limitations is ahead of the game when he turns to hunting the singles.

Bobwhite's plump body, strong legs, and short wings were built for walking or running, and the bird prefers to travel on the ground, resorting to flight only when danger demands it.

It does not have the ability to flit about the forest in the manner of songbirds. Consequently, bobwhite



Bobwhite Quail (*Colinus Virginianus*)

likes an opening through which to reach the forest floor. Old roads, cleared areas in the woods, swamps and streams make ideal landing areas. Also, such places usually furnish good ground cover. The singles hunter should concentrate his efforts in such areas - when they are available.

New breeds of dogs are another change creeping into modern quail hunting. I grew up with English setters, and I still have a soft spot in my heart for the shaggy dogs with the friendly dispositions. Under the right conditions they are ideal bird dogs. The same is true of the wide ranging English pointers.

But both breeds tend to range widely, an ideal characteristic for making fast sweeps of spreading

fields of lespedeza or harvested grain, but in the thick cover preferred by the modern bird a wide ranging dog is hard to keep up with. Locating the dog once he is on point can be a problem.

Some hunters are turning to the newer breeds - German shorthaired pointers, Brittanies, and other close ranging dogs.

In the old days I could release my dogs from the kennel, start hunting almost in my back yard, and hunt all day, locating a half dozen to a dozen coveys. I would often walk 8 to 10 miles and developed a reasonably strong pair of legs in the process. Today it is still possible to kick up a dozen coveys in a long day of hunting, but I have to resort to a hunting car to do so. Too much of my old territory is off limits, broken up by big chunks of posted property where rich crops of game go to waste annually. My dogs and I cover a lot of territory and I still walk many miles in a day of hunting the areas I have permission to hunt.

In spite of the changes in birds, dogs, country and hunting methods, the bobwhite quail, *Colinus virginianus*, is the same animal that roamed the patch farms of a half century ago. It is still a hardy bird, its brown plumage is just as handsome as it ever was, its white meat just as tasty, and its explosive flush just as unnerving - but it is a tougher bird to bring down. I still use size 8 field loads as I did in the old days, but now I reload my shells. Those rock bottom depression prices are also ancient history. I still tote a shotgun with a 26-inch improved cylinder barrel, and I still hunt with a big-going English setter, though I am also experimenting with a German short-haired pointer, a cautious dog with a strong nose, but possibly too slow for today's more elusive bobwhite.

Yep, old Bob is still around, as hale and hardy as ever - and I suspect he will be here 40 years hence. Then someone else can write about the old days - the mid-1970's.

The Flier: Blackwater Beauty



By GERALD ALMY

It was one of those inspiring February days that come like a premature breath of spring in the midst of a cold, gray winter. Temperatures skyrocketed to 80° while only a few high billowy clouds dotted the azure sky. A prime day for pickerel to be cruising about, preparing to spawn, I hoped as I slid the johnboat into the Caroline County blackwater pond.

By noon the "jack pike" had convinced me otherwise. It seemed they weren't going to feed out of sheer orneriness. Only two skinny 16-inchers had come my way--one on a minnow and another on a weedless silver spoon tipped with a pork rind strip.

Before I could decide what to try next a swirl next to a protruding twig of rotting timber caught my eye. "Fish rising in February?" I muttered to myself incredulously. I stared blankly at the water and noticed a struggling insect caught in the surface film, its tiny wings glistening in the bright rays of winter sunlight. Then another, and another. Both flying ants and mayflies were on the water. It seemed they too were fooled into thinking spring had arrived early. By now a second rise had appeared near the brushpile and I hastily rigged up a 7½-foot fly rod and knotted a small rubber spider to the tippet.

When I hooked one of the risers and brought him thrashing to the boat, I was pleasantly surprised to

discover a flier on the end of the line. It had been several years since I had caught any of these spunky, greenish-brassy-colored sunfish, and I welcomed my renewed acquaintance with the "blackwater beauty" by releasing the first fish in a gesture of hospitality.

The pond I was fishing that winter day was chock-full of the colorful sunfish. They responded enthusiastically to the Number 2 rubber spider, even though it only remotely resembled the natural insects fluttering haplessly on the surface. When the lightwire hook finally popped off this fly, the fish didn't seem at all taken aback by a switch to a Number 10 Grey Wulff.

Getting the fish to the boat was not an unchallenging task either, in spite of their modest 7 and 8 inch length. The pond was thick with sunken brush and decaying lily stems. Virtually every fish hooked would dart directly to these obstructions, wrap quick circles around them, and shake free in seconds if line wasn't stripped in and pressure applied in rapid order after the hookup. It was a hectic three hours of dry fly fishing in mid-winter before I eased reluctantly out of the weedy, black-water pond, loaded down with a couple dozen fish kept out of perhaps 50 or 60 fliers and a smattering of richly colored bluegills.

The flier is a bit of a mystery fish. In areas where he does not abound, he's virtually unknown. Mention flier to most anglers in Piedmont or Western Virginia and you'll likely get

an uncomprehending blank stare in response: "What's a flier?"

A flier is an energy-packed, handsome little sunfish. Not quite as rounded as the typical bluegill, the shape of the flier's body more closely resembles that of the crappie. It's color blends from a greenish near its dorsal to a brassy, metallic-yellowish hue on the flanks. Dark, irregular spots mark some of the scales below the lateral line, and a black mark is present behind the eye on the gill plate. A thin edging of white outlines the anal fin. The flier's mouth is slightly larger than the bluegills, but not as big as the warmouth's or crappie's. The most striking feature of the flier is its large anal fin. It stands out prominently in a freshly caught specimen as the fish arches its fins when lifted from the water.

The flier is a prolific breeder. When a female flier lays her eggs in late spring, she will likely deposit over 5,000. This fecundity not only satisfies the large appetite of the flier's usual cohabitant, the chain pickerel, it also provides an ample surplus for canny anglers eager for fast fishing action and mouthwatering table fare.

Though fliers are not restricted to such blackwaters, which are found most typically in the coastal third of the state, it is here that they are most abundant and grow largest. Lake Drummond, in the southeast corner of the state, has good populations of fliers.

Since fliers rarely exceed 8 or 9 inches in length and half a pound in

weight, angling is best done with ultralight tackle. The fish can put up a scrappy fight when you use gear to match their size. But with heavier equipment, it simply becomes a task of wrenching them out of the stainy water like so much "meat."

Fliers are not particularly difficult to catch. They are notorious insect feeders, and hence offer superb fly fishing sport. Though wet flies will take the black water beauties when patterns such as the black ant or drab colored nymphs are employed, surface offerings are my first choice on most occasions.

Fliers are seldom very selective as to fly patterns, but they do seem partial to the quiet-swimmers rather than noisier poppers. Especially good patterns are the sponge rubber-bodied spiders with white rubber

legs dangling out the sides. These flies have a soft feel in the mouth which sometimes gives you an extra second to set the hook, and the rubber legs add an alluring, life-like motion when the bug is twitched gently on the surface. Sizes Number 8-12 are good, with green, yellow, red, and white all effective colors.

Other good topwater patterns include traditional trout flies in sizes Number 10-14. These imitate more realistically than most bass and panfish flies the natural insects fliers feed on, but require an application of floatant to ride the surface well for extended periods.

Poppers can be good, particularly if they have rubber legs, but these flies should be worked with a very gentle swimming motion rather than actually "popped."

Acidic and rich in vegetation, swamplands are prime flier habitat.



The fish will be found primarily around weed beds, lily pads, or any sunken trees or brushpiles in the water. Not only do these areas harbor abundant insect life and small minnows for the fish to gorge on, they also offer some semblance of protection from the marauding bass and pickerel that usually cohabit the ponds and creeks with them.

Fliers pack an amazing amount of gusto in their strike, considering their diminutive size. But they are just as quick to spit out anything they don't like the taste of--such as cold, barbed steel! Because of this, it's necessary to keep all the slack out of line after making the cast and to strike quickly when you have a take.

Bluegills generally strike a fly after it's been twitched once or not at all. Not so with fliers. Sometimes they'll smack it following the third or fourth movement of the fly. Compared to bluegills, fliers seem to smack flies a little harder. They don't fight quite as strongly as a bluegill once hooked, but they seem a bit craftier and more adept at getting off the hook.

Fliers also offer fine sport on ultralight spinning tackle. Good lures include the curly-tailed spinnerbaits, white bucktails, tiny spoons, and small silver spinners. Generally a smooth steady retrieve brings the best results. Fliers often follow a spinning lure for long distances--sometimes right up to the boat. If you see fish doing this, stop your retrieve and let the lure sink towards the bottom. You'll be surprised how many fish will grab it on the "drop."

Bait is no slouch for fliers, either. Worms, minnows, crickets and grasshoppers are all good natural offerings. These are particularly effective during hot summer months when the fish are schooled up in deep water.

If you've never fished for fliers why not give them a try? They can offer new and different sport and the blackwater beauties fry up to a delectable essence with butter and a splash of lemon.

Taxidermy for the Sportsman

By GERALD ALMY

At one time or another, we've all faced the same dilemma. Lady Luck has shone upon you and there lying at your feet rests a handsome buck with a fine rack; or maybe a hefty bass or an especially large crappie flops on the bottom of your johnboat. Perhaps you've bagged a grouse which might not look like anything unusual, but which had eluded you on numerous trips before and required a quick, difficult shot to bring down.

You want to preserve this wild creature that has provided you such pleasure in pursuing and capturing. Pictures help, but if you're like most of us, they usually end up getting piled up carelessly in an old dusty shoebox stashed in the back of the closet and seldom looked at.

You know what you would really like — a mount of your quarry to hang proudly on the wall. But it's the same old saw — too much money. You can't afford the luxury. Oh, maybe once or twice an unusually noteworthy specimen may compel you to spend the large sum required to get it "stuffed." But how many memorable fish, birds, or animals do you bag in a lifetime? More than a couple if your attraction to the sport is very strong. One or two a season would be more like it. Even more if you happen to have a banner year.

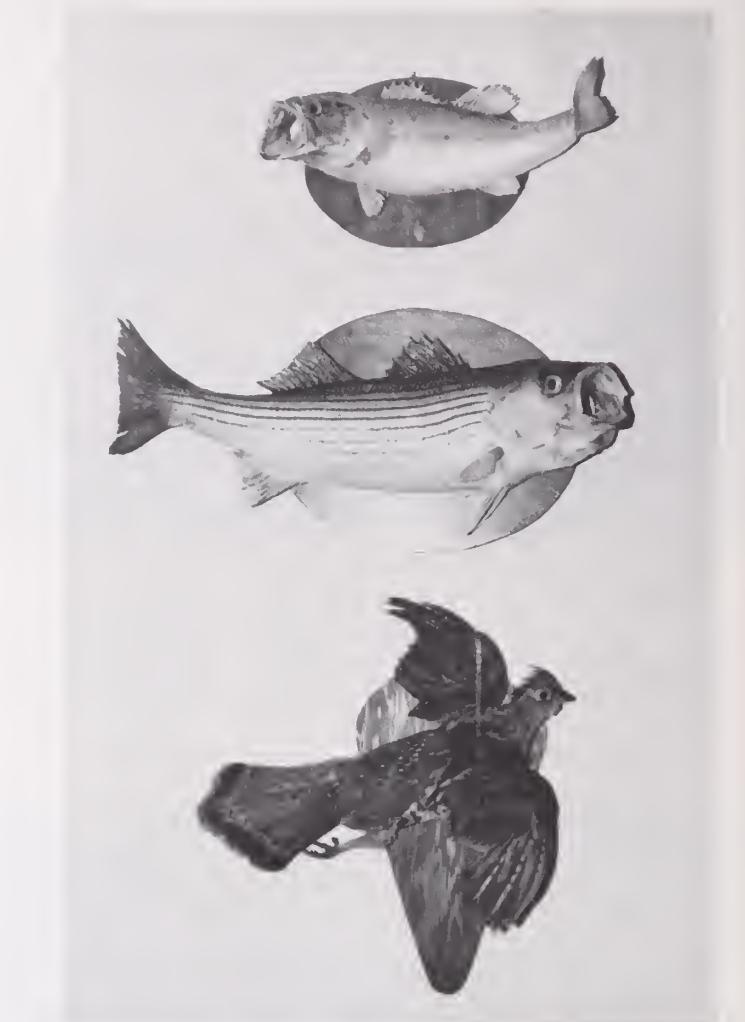
And then, of course, a fish, animal, or bird doesn't necessarily have to be enormous for you to want to preserve it. Quality, not size, is the all-important consideration.

No one but myself would think the average-sized cock grouse hanging on my office wall is anything special. But that bird and the memories he stimulates each time I gaze at him — my first grouse ever bagged — are priceless.

Yet he cost me a mere 86 cents for the materials to mount him myself, and took barely four hours of my time — and a very enjoyable four hours they were. Taxidermy is an easily learned, absorbing pastime which more sportsmen would do well to try. Next time you land an average-sized fish or bag a game bird or mammal, why not let your creative instincts go to work and see what kind of a mount you can come up with.

It's best to start with just an average specimen, for your first try or two will probably not be especially attractive. But don't give up. By the third or fourth specimen of a particular game or fish species, you should be getting results close to those of professional taxidermists.

I still keep the first fish I mounted, for memory's sake; but what a strange looking creature that three and three-fourth pound pickerel turned out to be! Yet by my fourth



A four-pound bass, a nine-pound rockfish, and a ruffed grouse...all bring back memories of good days afield. Commercial taxidermy is expensive, and with some practice, you can do mounts of your own.

This small assortment of basic taxidermy tools and materials will see the beginner through numerous mounts. The cost is quite reasonable, and most are available locally or through a taxidermy supplier.



fish, a five-pound largemouth, things were looking up indeed. The same applies to the first two quail I prepared — skinny necks, drooping wings, sagging head, flat thin bodies, and unnatural, stilted poses were the norm. By the time I got to my first grouse, though, my apprenticeship on the quail had taught me a thing or two about mounting birds, and the outcome was 100 percent better.

Like anything else, including fishing and hunting, taxidermy is an art which takes practice to become proficient. Once you serve your apprenticeship, though, you'll have a rewarding hobby at your fingertips for decorating your walls and desk tops, a worthwhile pastime to occupy those evening hours otherwise spent in front of a stultifying TV set. You will be proud of the priceless trophies which will insure that the memories of your hunting and fishing trips remain etched strong and bright in your mind.

The tools required for the beginning, amateur taxidermist are few in number and low in cost. Basically, you can get by with a pair of scissors, razor blade, scalpel, wire cutters, dubbing needle, brain spoon, knife, and fat scraper. Among materials you will need to get started are borax, corn meal, string, thread, Styrofoam, pins, needles, cotton, excelsior, wax, and an assortment of glass eyes. With these tools, and materials you should be able to mount birds, fish and small game animals. Preparing deer heads will require head forms, and ear linings, which can be ordered from any reliable taxidermy supply house, after measuring the animal. A list of several such firms is included at the end of this piece. Others can be found in the advertisements on the back pages of most national outdoor sports magazines.

Of course you can't just start mounting a specimen by "feel" or instinct. You'll need a guide to help you along the first half dozen times or so. Several good books on taxidermy are available at well-stocked book stores and libraries or they may be ordered directly from the publisher. A list of several of these books will be found at the end of this article.

Be leery of signing up for any "courses" on taxidermy unless you're sure you are that interested in the hobby and feel their approach is best suited for you. Frankly, all you need to know to become a proficient hobbyist can be taught

It will help to study photos of live specimens for correct poses and positioning of wings, legs, etc. Locate the best natural base for the mount to enhance realism.



A fresh fish or freshly thawed one can be used. Lay the fish on a thick sheet of Styrofoam and trace around the fish with a pen or marker.



Using the traced outline and referring to the shape of the fish, carve a body to match that of the specimen, excluding tail and head.



Smooth and shape the body with sandpaper. You may want to try a slightly curved body as if the fish were jumping. Skin out the fish, (below) working from the side which will not show. This is a slow tedious job; all the meat must be scraped and cut free from the skin. Rub the skin with borax when completed. Then the skin should be soaked in a borax solution for two or three days for curing.





Stretch the still-wet skin over the body tightly and pin it up the backside. Make sure that no wrinkles or sagging spots form



Use pieces of Styrofoam or cardboard to "card" or hold the fins in flared position for drying. Straight pins work well. Prepare the fish for painting by rubbing it with turpentine. Mix oil colors to match those of the freshly-caught fish. A color slide in a viewer will help. Apply colors sparingly, utilizing the color and markings in the dried skin.



Wax can be applied to the inside of the mouth and smoothed with the fingers or a brush. Although eyes were not fixed in place before the final paint job, it is usually best to do so. Paint the backs of the eyes from color notes made before death of the fish. When the paint is dry, spray with the varnish or other fixative (right).



Anything worthwhile takes time. Don't expect many shortcuts to quality work when it comes to home taxidermy. You may want to practice on something less than "trophies" to sharpen your skill.

to yourself from following the instructions in a good book on the subject and applying a little elbow grease.

The most fun will come, of course, from mounting specimens of the animals, birds, or fish which you pursue most avidly — be it deer, grouse, squirrels, quail, bass, crappie, or whatever. From my experiences with all these species, I suggest starting out on a fish. They are probably the easiest creatures for the beginner to mount.

If you're looking for a filler for some spare time, taxidermy might just be the hobby to fill the void. For fishermen and hunters, it's a doubly rewarding pastime, allowing you to "get the feel" of the very creatures that are the wellsprings of a lifetime passion. It's a labor of love.

Books for the Beginning Taxidermist:

Grantz, G. J. 1967. *Amateur Taxidermist*. Allentown, Pennsylvania.

Grantz, G. H. 1969. *Home Book of Taxidermy and Tanning*. Stackpole. 160 p.

Moyer, J. W. 1953. *Practical Taxidermy, A Working Guide*. Ronald Press Co. New York 126 p.

Pray, L. L. 1943. *Taxidermy*. Macmillan Co. New York. 91 p.

Where to Buy Taxidermy Supplies:

Herter's Inc., Waseca, Minnesota, 56093. Catalog: \$1.

J. W. Elwood Supply Co. Inc., 1202 Harney, Box 3507, Omaha, Nebraska 68103. Catalog: Free.

Vandyke's. Woonsocket 17, South Dakota 57385. Catalog: 50 cents.

Taxidermy Supplies, Box 5815J. Bossier City, Louisiana 71010. Catalog: Free.

Penn Taxidermy, DA-4, Hazelton, Pennsylvania 18201. Catalog: \$2.

Jonas Bros, Inc., Dept. 3, 1037 Broadway, Denver, Colorado 80202. Catalog: \$2.

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Conservationgram



REPORT SAYS GO ON ENDANGERED SPECIES. A report by the Committee on Endangered Species submitted to the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries at their meeting on Friday, January 14, 1977 indicates that the Commission will go ahead with a limited program of research and inventory projects covering all endangered species known to exist in the state. The project will be in cooperation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Federal financial aid is expected to be used in carrying out the program.

The cost of the program is estimated at \$45,000 per year, part of which will be in the form of regular employees time, travel etc. and part in the form of contractual services. The program is designed to be scaled down, terminated or accelerated on a year to year basis as available State and Federal funding dictates.

The endangered species projects should give the Commission an opportunity to determine if more intensive endangered species management is needed and practical. Management could include habitat protection and manipulation, transplanting and range extension. However, until more is known about the actual status of the various endangered species in Virginia no definite management or recovery program can be planned.

CROP FAILURE CUTS SEED PRODUCTION. Reports from the Game Commission's seed farm at Amelia show a 25% decrease in seed production. Dry weather this past summer which plagued many farmers in Virginia also affected the farming operation run by the Commission. With the purchase of seed from other sources, Commission Biologists feel that the amount of seed available to sportsmen for planting will be adequate. Sportsmen cooperation is needed however since the supply will be somewhat shorter than in previous years. The seed, available through Virginia's game wardens, is planted in food patches by sportsmen in order to provide additional food and cover for birds and other wildlife.

VIRGINIA BEACH TO BE SITE OF CONSERVATION WRITERS' CONVENTION. In June of '78 several hundred outdoor writers from all parts of the U. S. and Canada will descend upon Virginia Beach for the 51st Annual Conference of the Outdoor Writers Association of America. Headquartered at the New Cavalier Hotel the writers will have meetings, seminars and field trips during the week long conference and then many will spread out over the state in order to see and write about the many outdoor oriented activities available in Virginia.

STATEWIDE DEER TAKE UP SLIGHTLY. Preliminary figures indicate that Virginia hunters tagged at least 63,475 whitetails during the 1976-77 season, reports Game Division Field Coordinator Kit Shaffer.

"Apparently the unusually poor hunting weather this season had little effect on success," he said. The preliminary count was about 32 ahead of last year's final total.

Southampton County led the State with 2,770 deer reported followed by Bath reporting 2,385 and Rockingham with 2,274. In the east, Amelia ranked second with 1,811 and Buckingham was third reporting 1,804. Biologists are still rounding up stray tags which are expected to increase the total slightly.

Wildlife Violators:

A Personal Responsibility

By KIRK H. BEATTIE

We trudged through the narrow two-foot deep channel that would lead us to our assigned waterfowl blind in the flooded hardwoods. Glancing at my watch I noticed it was 5:45 a.m., still 45 minutes before legal shooting time. We could hear other hunters making their way to assigned blinds. We finally reached a two-acre flooded opening in the woods which was to be our hunting location. We had made it with time to spare; it was still a half hour before legal shooting time. We rested our guns on some stumps surrounding the perimeter of the opening and began placing mallard and pintail decoys over the area. Since there were three of us we decided to triangulate the flooded opening. We had no sooner reached our agreed-upon locations when it happened. Ravenous, noisy, big-breasted mallards began dropping from the sky like B27's. The acorn-seeking ducks plummeted fearlessly downward. Approximately 200 mallards had settled on our little waterhole in the woods within the time it takes to watch a television commercial. I stood like the Rock of Gibraltar and felt like a young child at Christmas waiting to open his first present.

I daringly glanced at my watch; 6:31 a.m., legal shooting time was 15 minutes away. I signaled to my wife and fellow hunting companion that we still had 15 minutes to wait. Bang! Bang! Bang! "Sportsmen" in a nearby blind couldn't resist the temptation and began shooting at the dark objects in the predawn



Legal and ethical hunting conduct is largely up to the individual hunter. There will never be enough wardens to apprehend all violators.

light. The "sportsmen" apparently set off a chain reaction. Hunters in other blinds began firing incessantly at the flocks of mallards. I glanced at my watch; 6:31 a.m. was 13 minutes away. My fellow hunting partners and I dutifully waited for the legal hour to arrive. It was too late. The frightened mallards had long since left the area. They would not be back today.

How would I explain this frustrating, maddening situation to my wife? I had persuaded her to come with me on this cold morning in January. This was to be her first hunting experience. How could I explain the actions of my fellow "sportsmen?" I hesitantly glanced in her direction. She was staring at me with a look of disappointment and disgust. I could not meet her gaze. I methodically began loading the decoys into canvas bags. We would not be back again that year. Our limited time schedule prevented us from enjoying desirable recreational pursuits. Cleveland Amory came close to acquiring a convert that day, my wife. Fortunately, I somehow managed to persuade my wife that what had happened was a freak occurrence, but I knew better.

Who has the responsibility for controlling the actions of persons who violate wildlife statutes? Your immediate response would probably be "the wildlife enforcement officer." Should we blame the enforcement officer for failing to apprehend most wildlife violators? I think not. You would be hard-pressed to find a group of men more dedicated to their profession.

A 16-hour working day is probably the rule rather than the exception among wildlife enforcement officers. The wildlife agent is only human and can cover a limited amount of terrain. He cannot be everywhere at once.

I think we would agree that there are not enough wildlife officers to control the vast number of wildlife violations that occur. What if it were possible to double the number of wildlife officers in the field? Would that solve the problem? Again, I think not. Studies in Idaho and Maine have suggested that wildlife officers detect approximately one percent of the violations that occur. It would logically follow that a doubling of officers might allow a two percent detection of wildlife violations.

Wildlife law enforcement is a very costly business. The average state wildlife agency spends about a third of its operating budget on wildlife law enforcement. Large increases in wildlife officers would drastically cut into funds needed for habitat management, public hunting area acquisition, wildlife research, and endangered species management.

Most popular anti-poaching articles stress that wildlife violations seriously harm wildlife populations. There is some truth to this. Frankly, we do not know what effect most types of violations have on wildlife populations, but we can make professional judgments. Populations of grizzly bears, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, wolverines, and even the California Condor are very unstable. Poaching in any form would seriously threaten the existence of these species. On the other hand, most small game animals such as cottontail rabbits, bobwhite quail, and mourning doves are very resilient because of their high breeding capacity. Poaching of these animals probably does not result in decreased numbers from year-to-year but may result in reduced local populations during a given year. For example, the daily bag limit on cottontail rabbits in most Western states is 10. If someone were to hunt a 100-acre tract occupied by 50 rabbits at the start of the season and were to harvest 30 of the rabbits in one day (20 over the limit), the next person hunting the tract would find it difficult to harvest his legal limit of rabbits. Continued hunting of the area would result in fewer rabbits harvested. A female cottontail is capable of producing up to 28 young a year and, in all probability, there would again be 50 rabbits present on the 100-acre tract at the start of the next hunting season. Hunting seasons and limits are set to produce a certain harvest and cheating can certainly increase this harvest beyond safe limits. One of the primary functions of laws, regulations, and wildlife law enforcement is to prevent an inequitable distribution of the harvest.

The recent airing of "The Guns of Autumn" grossly misrepresented the hunting experience of the average hunter and the positive contributions of wildlife man-

LAW VIOLATIONS 1976

No hunting, fishing or trapping license	— 4,119
Trespassing	— 1,793
No special stamps or permits	— 868
Possession of game or fish, or hunting or fishing during closed seasons	— 631
Spotlighting	— 597
Exceeding bag, size or creel limits	— 485
Weapon violations (hunting from auto, highway, etc.)	— 264
Illegal weapons, devices or baits	— 254
Improper, unsigned, borrowed or falsely secured license	— 228
Hunting or fishing on Sunday	— 54

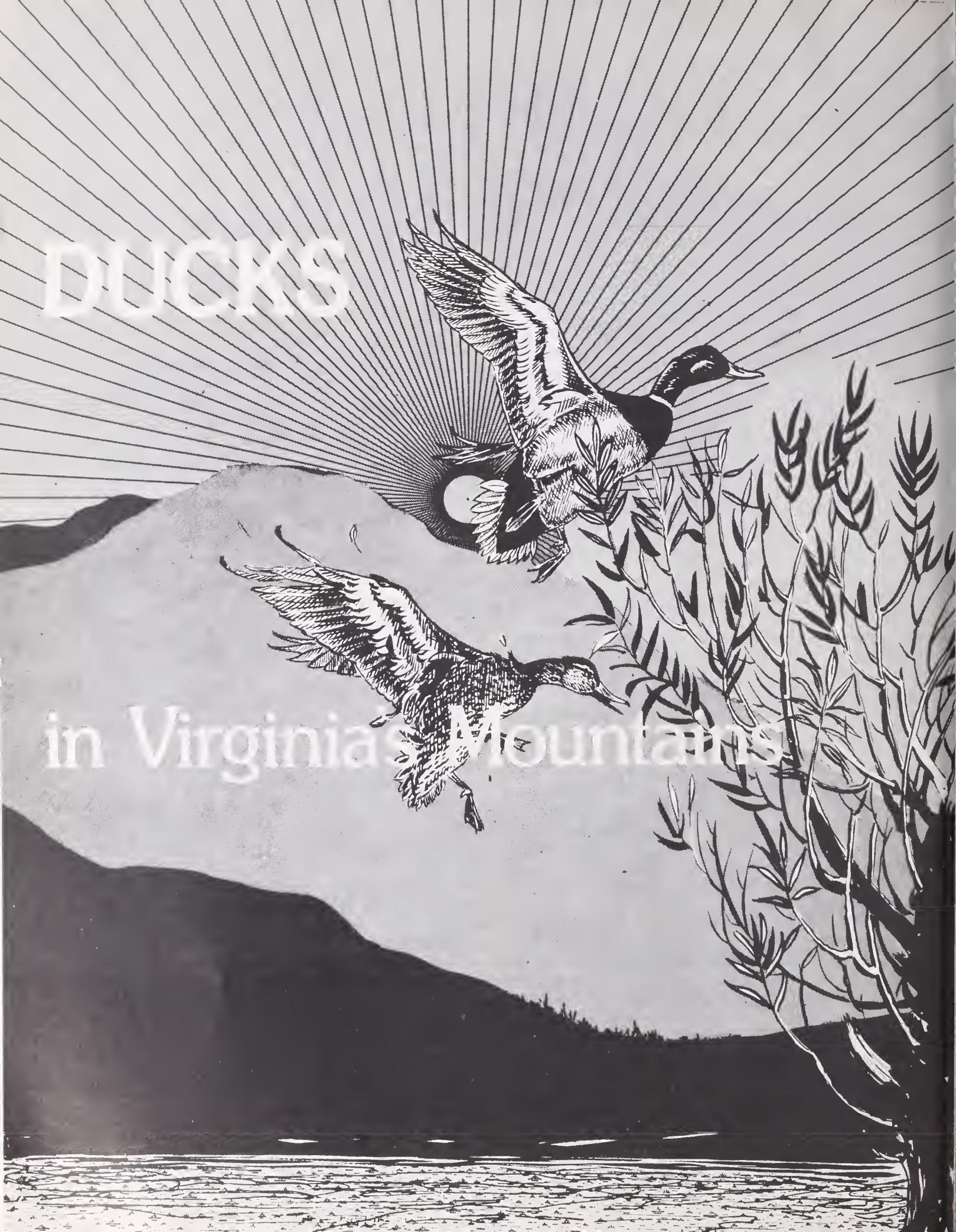
(These violations are only the top ten general categories out of a total of 76 different types of violations.)

agement. For all its faults, biases, and un-truths it may have done some good. We realize that among our number there are those who do not respond to the sportsman's code of ethics. We should stop relying totally on a relatively small number of dedicated wildlife law enforcement officers to control the actions of millions of sportsmen. They cannot do the job alone; they need your help.

The next time you observe early shooting in the marsh or hear about someone taking more than his fair share of game, do something about it. Use your personal judgment when entering into a potentially dangerous situation. It is contrary to our nature to "inform" on someone. If you do not feel right about reporting a violation committed by a friend or acquaintance, simply tell him what you think about his illicit behavior. Tell him that you have been waiting two years to see the excitement in your child's eyes when he bags his first rabbit, quail, or duck. The extra rabbit or quail he so nonchalantly bagged could have been your child's first trophy.

The incident I described at the beginning of this article was not faked or trumped-up; it actually happened. Last December I again persuaded my wife to go duck hunting with me. We arose at 4:30 a.m. on a bleak morning in December. We hunted on a different marsh in a different state. The situation was different this time; the early shooting began 20 minutes before legal shooting time instead of 15 mintues.

I fear my wife will no longer accompany me on future early morning duck hunts. She has had enough. Her first two duck hunting "experiences" were ruined by the actions of others. I no longer try to "explain away" the actions of a small minority of my fellow sportsmen.



Ducks

in Virginia Foundation

"Here comes another big bunch; hope I can count them all," I thought to myself as I struggled to keep the canoe pointed downstream, get my binoculars in position, and get an accurate count of the several hundred scaup that flew overhead. This flock was followed by several smaller bunches of buffleheads, goldeneyes and the hunters' choices, mallards and black ducks.

Did this scene occur on Virginia's eastern shore where thousands of ducks concentrate each year to wait for spring? No, it happened right in the midst of the Blue Ridge Mountains in southwestern Virginia.

As a graduate student in wildlife management at V.P.I. & S.U., I was studying the abundance and diversity of waterfowl on the New River. I floated a 15 mile portion of the river once a month for a period of one year to determine the annual cycle of waterfowl through the area.

This trip began at dawn when I launched my canoe at the Pepper Ferry bridge. As I paddled out to the center of the river, the sun was hidden behind low clouds, giving the river a slate gray appearance. It was January, cold, and the river was up higher than usual, reminding me to watch every move I made or end up taking an unwanted swim in the cold water. Suddenly a pair of ducks burst from the bank. From their low flight over the water and oo-eek oo-eek cry, I recognized them as wood ducks. I would see quite a few woodies before the trip was over, mostly in isolated pairs. As the river flowed into the Radford Army Ammunition Plant, the number of ducks increased. Small groups of mallards were floating near the edge and flushed, quacking in protest as I approached. The rapids were next and I could concentrate only on keeping my canoe afloat. The ducks I startled into flight here would fly downstream so I could count them later. Perspiring and relieved at another successful bout with the swift water, I continued my observations. Off to my right were flashes of white as a large flock of black ducks rose from the water. Suddenly ducks were everywhere, and I was kept busy identifying and counting them as they flew overhead or veered to the right or left behind the trees lining the river's edge. In this area of riffles and shallow pools were mostly the puddle ducks: mallards, blacks, wigeon, wood ducks and an occasional blue-winged teal, somehow delayed on his trip south. By hugging the bank I could often surprise ducks and get beautiful views of them as they flew off in fright. Ducks weren't the only animals present along the river; deer and muskrat were plentiful and an occasional raccoon or fox was seen. Later in the year ospreys would be present perching in the tall sycamores.

About 2½ hours from launch time, the river widened out and slowed down. Here was diving duck territory in the deeper slower water. Scaup were plentiful here, churning up the water as they launched themselves upward. The whistling wings of goldeneyes was unmistakeable as a large flock passed overhead. Small bunches of buffleheads were seen, twisting and turning, showing off their black and white markings as they flew swiftly by. Hooded mergansers were seen, usually in pairs, and one sizeable flock of ring-necks passed on my left. The river turned now. Scattered among small islands and riffles were more mallards and black ducks.

Finally, I saw my wife, Jackie, on the bank ahead, waiting with the pickup that would take us back to Blacksburg. Bounding along the bank was Gypsy, our golden retriever puppy, who I hope some day will be a first-rate companion for waterfowl hunts. I was tired and cold but filled with memories of the over 1000 ducks of nine species I had seen. It had been a good trip.

If you live in western Virginia and desire to see or hunt waterfowl close to home, take a drive and locate one of the rivers or small streams nearby. Waterfowl are most abundant in the fall and winter, although I did find them present year round. If you venture out in the spring or early summer, you may be lucky enough to see a hen wood duck with her young.

If you do go out, it is only wise to take certain precautions. Take life jackets along and wear them! Scout the river from the road beforehand or take someone who knows where the rapids and dangerous areas occur. Don't go out when the river is up following a hard rain; and if you have any doubts as to the safety of a certain action, don't do it! Take a strong arm and a keen eye. Happy waterfowling!

Photo Knuth



Hunters tend to think only of mallards, blacks and woodies as inland visitors but the variety will surprise the uninitiated.

ANIMAL HOSPITAL

Help for Battered Travelers on Virginia's Eastern Shore

By Curtis J. Badger

The dirt road twists through a cut-over pine woods, bumps through a thicket of scrubs and myrtles, and opens up to reveal a sprawling, modern home complete with tennis court, orchard, and more animals than you can count.

Peacocks and guinea birds strut their stuff in the front yard. A black, white, and tan collie approaches with a grin, tunnels between your legs, and puts its slender muzzle in your hand. A barrel-chested black lab looks on from his station at the corner of the house, unexcited, haughty, tough as a longshoreman in a waterfront bar. In the backyard there are more animals, most of which are in cages and pens, most of which are recovering from some kind of accident or illness. There are ducks, loons, otters, a variety of songbirds, and a raccoon that commutes between the food dish in his pen and the creek and marshland that form the boundary of the back lot.

Watching over this menagerie is Dottie Valentine, who for six years has been devoting most of her time to caring for injured wildlife. Last year this Eastern Shore resident took in 75 animals with varying ailments, treated them in her backyard hospital, and released most of them in the woods and marshland nearby.

Of the 75 animals treated last year, she found only one herself. The remainder were brought to her by people who had been given her name. But Mrs. Valentine isn't complaining, though the food and medical bills average \$80 to \$100 per month, and there are \$1600 worth of cages and pens in the backyard.



THIS LADY IS THE ANIMALS' BEST FRIEND

The burgeoning animal population doesn't bother Mrs. Valentine's husband, Larry, either. He is a medical doctor and the demands on his time are great, but weekends often include projects with the animals. "We're in this together," Mrs. Valentine says. "It takes two to handle some animals, and his knowledge of medicine and surgery comes in handy. I couldn't do it without him."

"He's also great at building cages," she says. "He designs them and makes me do all the labor."

Having received a degree in nursing from the University of Alabama, Mrs. Valentine has a good academic foundation for her work with wildlife. She worked as a nurse until about two-and-one-half years ago, retiring to devote full time to the animals.

Soon after the Valentines moved to the Eastern Shore in 1967, they began working with injured animals. "There were no veterinarians nearby then," she says, "and sometimes we were brought injured animals. It was frustrating because there was nothing we could do."

So they began reading veterinary textbooks, and began spending more time caring for injured animals.

When the Valentines realized the animals were becoming a fulltime project they decided to apply for federal and state permits to house wildlife. "We got the migratory bird permit through the Department of Interior with no problems," said Mrs. Valentine, "but getting the state permit was more difficult."

She credits Virginia Game Warden Johnny Crumb with helping her get the state permit. "Johnny was familiar with my facilities, and he knew this wasn't a



spur of the moment thing, so he went to bat for me. He was terrific to work with."

Crumb makes periodic inspections of Mrs. Valentine's facilities, and she is required to keep detailed reports on each animal she cares for.

"A lot of people don't realize that it is illegal to keep wild animals without a permit," says Mrs. Valentine. "It can also be dangerous. My husband has treated many people for animal bites," she says. "Let me give you a word of warning: Don't try to domesticate wild animals. I've had many animals brought to me by people who had found them and thought they would make nice pets, but it just doesn't work out that way. I once was brought a broadwing hawk that someone had taken from the nest and tried to domesticate. It was in terrible shape. It took a year-and-a-half to get him releasable, and even then it was questionable."

In a cage on the patio is a blue jay that had been shot with a BB gun, and a dove with most of its feathers missing. In another cage is a screech owl blinded in a collision with an automobile. Two loons, three old squaw, and a black duck are in cages in the back yard, victims of the February Chesapeake Bay oil spill.

Although Mrs. Valentine obviously loves each animal she takes in, she suppresses the urge to keep them after they have healed and are ready for release. Only the unreleasable animals, such as the blind owl, are permanent fixtures at the backyard clinic. "My goal is to help and release the animals," she explains. "People who take in wild animals are privileged to have them in their company for a while. It's only right that they should go back to their natural homes."

Left Top: Sooty, a starling rescued from a near-fatal fall down a chimney, is fully recovered and makes his home in nearby woods. He roams at will, but often returns for a handout. Top: A permanent resident is this squirrel, raised by Mrs. Valentine from birth. Attempts to release it were unsuccessful so it now occupies the patio of the Valentine's home. Below: This loon was a victim of the February oil spill in the Chesapeake Bay. The oil was successfully removed but the bird suffered from arthritis in its leg joints. It is responding well to injections of cortisone.



Wildlife

Edited by Mel White

Kaleidoscope is a new and continuing feature in Virginia Wildlife that we hope you will enjoy. Here we'll present the ideas and adventures of the editors and other outdoor writers from Virginia and elsewhere. The scope will be broad, but the articles will be short and concise. Our readers are invited to send in stories of their own outdoor experiences-- just keep 'em short-- no more than two double spaced type-written pages. We will also use this space for occasional important announcements, like the one on this page which is an art and carving show that benefits blind and crippled children. And, if a really new product, one that works, comes along we'll tell you what we think about that too. —M.W.

RICHMOND'S FIFTH ANNUAL WILDFOWL CARVING AND ART EXHIBITION

Top decoy carvers and artists from around the United States are expected at the 5th Annual Wildfowl Carving and Art Exhibition to be held June 4 and 5 at the State Fairgrounds in Richmond.

The Northside Lions' Club of Richmond is again sponsoring this event, and the proceeds will be used to aid in their work with the blind, and crippled children.

A new feature at this year's exhibition will be "The Great James River Decoy Contest." Awards will be given for the best working and best decorative decoys entered.

Most of the decoys, carvings and other handicrafts on display in the Commonwealth Building may be purchased from the artists.

The exhibition was originally scheduled for February 12 and 13 but, due to the energy emergency, the show has been re-scheduled for Saturday, June 4 and Sunday, June 5. Admission is \$1.50 for adults and \$1.00 for students. Children under six will be admitted free.

For additional information, contact Webster Fue (782-1256, Southern State Cooperative, 7th & Main Streets, Richmond, Virginia 23213).

Virginia's Great Dismal Swamp Challenge For Bike Hikers

"How did we get into this?" I said to my 10-speed as I slogged to a stop. The new bicycle's bright red paint job had an even coat of dust, its gearing sprouted enough vegetation for a salad and the thin high pressure tires were up to their rims in the soft soil of the peat bog.

Not getting an answer I climbed back aboard and shifted into the lowest gear and continued on Bike Hike II, a ride into Virginia's Great Dismal Swamp. Actually, I got into this little adventure when I ran into a representative of Old Dominion

University's Dismal Swamp Programs at last year's hunting and fishing day activities down in Portsmouth. She suggested that I go along on the ride to view the kind of recreational and interpretative activities being promoted by Dismal Swamp Programs.

We started at a high school in Suffolk a week late, the first Saturday being rained out by the super storm of the season. That should have told me something. Nevertheless, the hundred or so bikers signed up and left in small groups, soon

shunning the pavement for a dirt road. Heading for the Jerico Ditch we encountered a group of deer hunters on stand. Even though they had been forewarned, they seemed barely tolerant of the strings of cyclists zipping through the space where they had hoped to see a deer. I stopped and talked to one grizzled old hunter who said that he had seen a couple of does and that his party had taken three bucks already that morning. Our chat was interrupted by the squawking of his two-way radio as the leader of the hunt barked some unintelligible CB jargon. Another bunch of bikers ground by and I joined them on their way to Jerico Ditch. The road paralleling Jerico Ditch has been there since the ditch was dug for drainage and transportation in the late 1700's and the

Kaleidoscope

Film Captures Spirit of Hunting

Audiences viewing the Game Commission's latest film "A Hunter's Challenge" have remarked on how quickly they were drawn into the spirit of this quail hunt and that they didn't realize how much they had learned about safe hunting until the film was over. The quick action of dog, gun and bird does fill much of this new 20-minute film and the hunting message, while there, is of the soft sell variety.

Starring Harry Gillam and Ken Collins, the film features West Virginia Rex doing a superb job of pointing quail and occasionally stealing a scene or two. This movie takes you along on a typical quail hunt in Piedmont Virginia. The effect of



looking over the hunter's shoulder and hearing their casual conversation gives the audience the feeling of being in on the hunt.

"A Hunter's Challenge" is available from the Game Commission film library for showing to sportsmen's and other interested groups.



BOBWHITE QUAIL. A signed and numbered edition restricted to 1,000 prints in full color from the original watercolor by Durant Ball. This print was produced on high quality, heavy stock. Paper size is 14"x 17". \$20.00 each, plus \$1.00 for postage and handling. Send check to artist: Durant Ball, 498 Pamela Drive, Newport News, Virginia 23601.



Photo White

bricks and assorted rubble that have been laid down to shore it up proved an obstacle course for the cyclists. As the surrounding vegetation of the swamp grew more dense the road changed from hard packed dirt to soft peat and finally into an almost completely overgrown trail. I didn't believe what I was going through with my 10-speed as I pedaled through undergrowth as high as the bike. Suddenly it was road again and up ahead the waters of Lake Drummond reflected the noonday sun.

I munched a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and drank the soft drinks provided, as Dr. Levy from ODU rigged up a makeshift PA system and presented a brief talk on the origins of the swamp and some of the problems it faces today.

Lunch over, we headed in twos

and threes up the Washington Ditch for the "easy" four or five miles back to the high school in Suffolk. We alternately whizzed along on hard packed clay and ground to a halt in sand sufficiently soft to stop the multi-gear bicycles. Back at the school, the girls from Dismal Swamp Programs passed out embroidered Bike Hike II patches to all those who finished the ride. If you ever see one sewn on someone's jacket you will know he has had a close-up view of this big peat bog, and is one of the few people that can say "I rode my bicycle into the Great Dismal Swamp." —M.W.

For more information on activities in the swamp contact Dismal Swamp Programs, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia.

Fishing Records

One Way to Keep Your Stringer Full

By BOB GOOCH

April 13, 1946, Albemarle Lake, Virginia. That 30-year-old date line comes from my fishing log, a record I have kept for years. Like most professional journalists I make many notes, and constantly refer to them. The records of my fishing trips are among the more elaborate ones.

Let's turn back the pages to that spring fishing trip over thirty years ago.

I was back in school at the University of Virginia following a wartime stint with the Marines in the Pacific, and this was my first postwar fishing trip. The call to arms had interrupted my angling also. My fishing techniques were a bit rusty and my log tells me I got skunked that cool, spring day.

Both the skies and the water were a bit cloudy and a slight breeze rippled the water. I know now the fishing should have been good, but I had to settle for a few half-hearted strikes.

As I study that dog-eared page of my fishing log, the memories come flowing back.

I was on the water often that postwar spring, trying to catch up on my long neglected fishing. It was a good season. Virginia's fertile waters yielded dozens of bluegills, both largemouth and smallmouth bass, crappie, redbreasted sunfish, yellow perch, rock bass, pickerel, catfish and silvery fallfish. I didn't get to the trout streams that season, but made up for it in later years.

There before me is February 28, 1954. Hunting was over for the year, and the new fishing season needed attention. My late Dad and I fished a farm pond that cool, cloudy, winter day. We were dunking live minnows in the private pond of a fellow angler and hunter. A storm was brewing and the storm front fishing produced some jumbo crappie from the clear water---plus a pair of fine chain pickerel.



Photo Dale

Or how about April 16, 1960? I had become an incurable trout fisherman by then, and opened the 1960 season on Crab Run in Highland County. A late winter blizzard dusted the mountains with fluffy snowflakes as I took my limit of 8 brook trout from the icy waters.

On August 14, 1975, my records tell me, my brother, his two sons and I fished the broad Rappahannock River near the Grey's Point Bridge. We launched my 15-foot outboard at the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries landing on the south shore of the river near Saluda and took Urbanna Creek to the river. It was good day. By noon we had run out of bait, but had a full ice chest of tasty saltwater fish. My catch included 10 croakers, 5 gray trout, and 2 toadfish.

While my fishing records open the gates to a flood of happy memories, they also provide more practical information.

From them I am able to establish patterns. For example, those early 1950 chain pickerel taken from a farm pond hit well on a cool day under overcast skies. Thumbing through my records I find that I have taken many good pickerel on cool or cold, cloudy days. Such weather conditions favor fishing for the ferocious chain pickerel.

My fishing log tells me that on September 4, 1967 a friend and I launched my canoe at the Warren ferry slip on the James River and fished to Scottsville. We had a fine day with a scrappy 4-pound smallmouth bass topping our catch. That fine bass hit a small spinner-fly combination lure. As I review my records I find that I have taken many good smallmouth bass on the same type lure — from the Rappahannock, Rivanna, Shenandoah and other good Virginia streams as well as from the lunker-producing James.

A review of my fishing records also tells me the James River has produced the largest smallmouth bass over the years, while the Rappahannock and Shenandoah have given up more but smaller ones. All are fine smallmouth streams, however.

My best crappie fishing months have been in the spring, my records tell me. These months are also tops for yellow perch — and for white perch as the popular little panfish make their annual spawning runs in the major tidal rivers. May and September have been prime smallmouth bass months. October might be good also, but I am busy with hunting by then, and my records are not extensive enough to establish a pattern.

Because I live in an area where convenient big waters do not exist I do much of my fishing on small streams. My records show that these small Piedmont streams are particularly productive of chain pickerel though I also take a variety of panfish, largemouth and smallmouth bass, and fallfish. My records tell me it is difficult to establish a season, weather or time of day pattern for fishing these small well-shaded streams. In the clear, cool waters, the fish seem to hit well at any time and at any season, though I fish them mostly during the warm summer months.

In addition to dates and waters fished, my records provide such information as fishing methods employed, companions, bait or lures, weather conditions, water conditions, hours fished, the most productive water, and a catch-all remarks column for recording miscellaneous information.

Once the columns are set up it takes just a few minutes at the end of a fishing trip to record the data. I enjoy doing it.

Using your fishing records to teach a young fisherman the ropes should help make the learning experience one with successful results.



The angler can devise his own log, providing space for the particular kind of information he desires to record. Generally, however, the information given above will suffice and provide a good record of fishing trips.

There are various hunting and fishing logs on the market, and some outdoor magazines offer them as an inducement to prospective subscribers. Others are advertized in various magazines.

Over the years I have used both those on the market and those of my own design.

The more complete the angler makes his fishing log the more valuable it will be in establishing fishing patterns that will serve him in his fishing efforts. Keeping the log should not be a burden, however. Make it simple, but as complete as possible.

Old time anglers, those who relied upon their memories and keen senses of observation to build their fishing lore, seldom used a note pad. They were keen observers of wildlife, and their success depended upon their ability to detect patterns and to keep them in mind.

Much of this general angling information has long since been permanently recorded as copy for newspaper columns, magazines and books. It is readily available to the modern angler. He can acquire much of it by fishing with experienced anglers. Still, there is a sense of satisfaction in developing your own fishing lore and establishing and confirming fishing patterns. The fishing log will help the angler do this.

The fading memories that my records bring sharply into focus, the patterns of weather, water, seasons, lures and other vital data they provide, and the better fishing waters they point to, are all valuable.

They also tell me something else — something I derive a deep sense of satisfaction from. As I compare my creels of the mid-1970's with those of the mid-1940 postwar years, I am pleased to note that I am enjoying greater success today.

Why? For one thing I hope I am a better angler, and that I have learned from those three decades of fishing the Old Dominion's varied waters. Experience does help, and those records have helped me grow as an angler.

But more important they tell me the fish resources in Virginia are richer than they were 30 years ago when I first started recording fishing information. The fishery biologists of the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries have done a good job of providing fishing for Virginia's growing army of eager anglers. Today we enjoy more fishing waters and better access to old ones.

Those early notes recorded in ink with a fine-pointed pen tell me something else. They are neat, legible and a pleasure to read, but those of the past season, scribbled with a ball point pen, are almost illegible. My fishing records tell me my angling has improved, but my permanence has suffered!

Miss Mathilda was a sweet, little old lady who was furious about moles, especially a big, blackish one, Scalop. The mole had taken over her beautiful flower-vegetable garden as his personal territory. The soil was a rich sandy loam that gardeners call "friable." And Scalop, by rapidly pushing his big, clawed arms before him, then swinging them promptly to the side, and at the same time pushing with his hind legs, could "swim" by jerks just under the surface of Miss Mathilda's garden.

If a young plant was in his path, his sharp claws cut it off and soon it toppled over, wilted, and died. Miss Mathilda cried as she picked up the fallen, put it on the heap with the other victims, then set another mole trap.

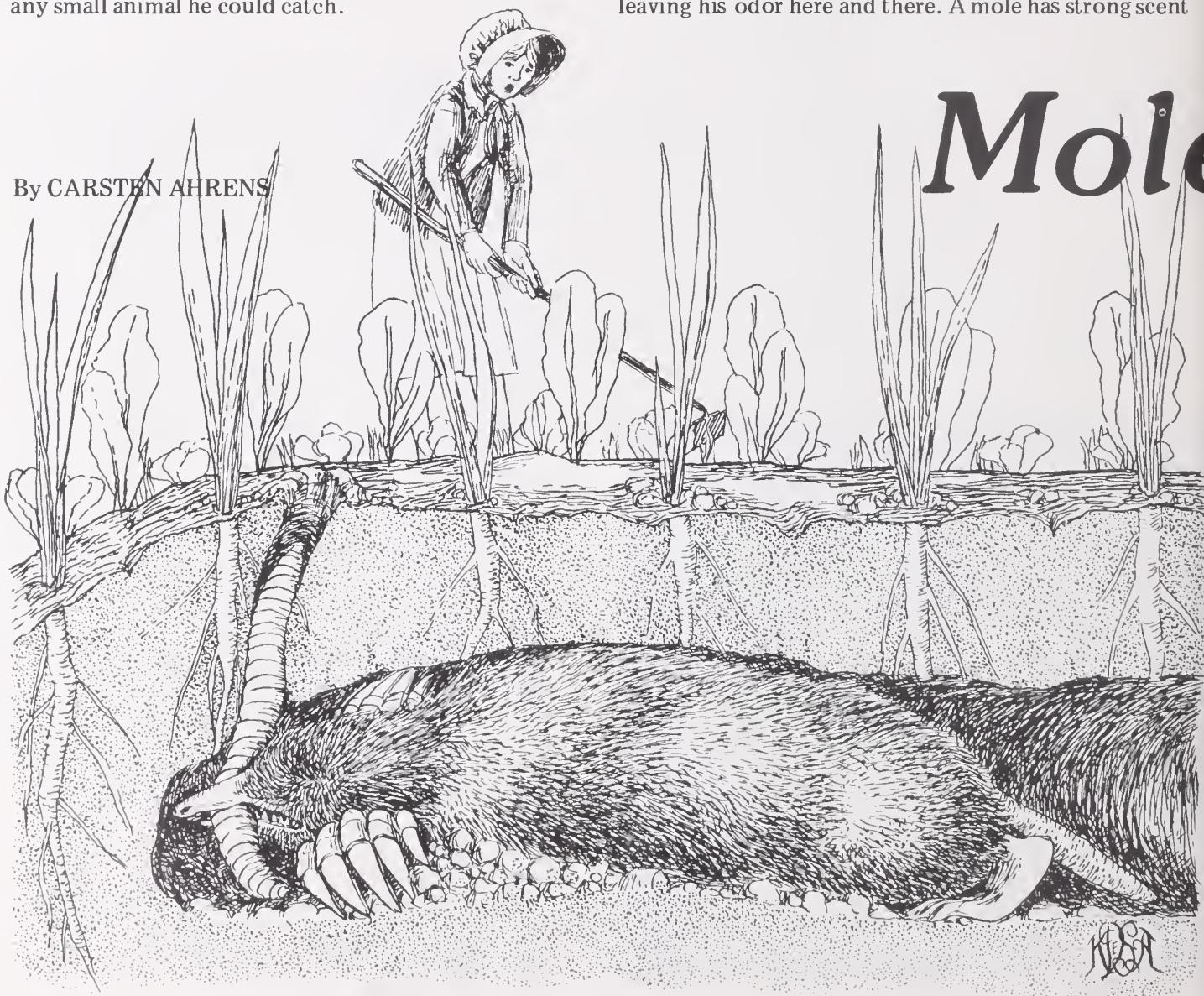
Now Scolop, the mole, didn't mean to destroy a single plant. He didn't dislike plants. He hardly knew they existed. He never nibbled on a carrot, beet, or rutabaga. He loved worms...angle or army worms, cut or wire worms, nightcrawlers...the whole lot of them, plus small snakes, lizards, salamanders, mice; in fact, any small animal he could catch.

Like moles generally and his only close relatives, the shrews, his appetite was so enormous that he was always hunting, catching, and eating, and as he "swam," he left behind an empty "hump-backed" tunnel through the lush lettuce, spinach, or poppies of Miss Mathilda's garden. Of course, to Scalop, it was his garden.

Scalop, his two sisters, and brother were born the past March in a warm grass-lined nest under the flagstones of a garden path. They were tiny, helpless, and blind at birth; yet before they were a month old, they were full-grown and their mother had taught them to catch worms by themselves. So when the old mole was caught in a trap and didn't come back, the four young ones were able to set out in four directions to seek their fortunes. Scalop found Miss Mathilda's garden and claimed it.

First he "swam" completely around the garden, leaving his odor here and there. A mole has strong scent

By CARSTEN AHRENS



glands just for this purpose. The odor should have been enough to warn other moles they were trespassing if they entered his territory. But the garden was a tempting place, and many hungry moles, especially young, inexperienced ones, moved in uninvited. Of course, Scalop had to drive them out.

Scalop was often tempted to travel overland to where the intruders were. That would save time. Instead he "swam," guided by his nose under the surface. When an intruder became aware of the angry Scalop, the scared chap often burst through the soil in order to escape. That was bad, and often his last move!

If it were daytime, then overhead, treading the air like a kingfisher bird, would probably be Spar, the Sparrow Hawk, who would swoop down and carry him away. If it were nighttime, a pair of owls in the cupola of the big barn took over on big, soundless wings to pick up the startled mole and hurry him away to the four variously-sized young ones in the hayloft.

Tale

Scalop's hunting and eating went on day and night, summer and winter. The only time he rested was just after he had eaten a great big worm and he was so full he couldn't eat another bite. Then he took a short nap while his food digested. That took little time. He was soon on the go, sniffing for something to eat. I almost wrote "looking" for something to eat, but moles, constantly pushing through the crumbly earth, have no use for sight. Had a mole big eyes like a rabbit's, he would have "something in his eye" all the time. So nature gave moles just tiny spots for eyes, deeply buried in the thick, gray-black fur. They depend on smell to know what is going on around them. Their ears are also tiny and out of sight, yet they are very sensitive to vibrations. Scalop knew just where Miss Mathilda was whenever she came into the garden. . . or set another mole trap!

Scalop knew about mole traps. They are quite unlike mice traps or muskrat traps with springs on one side. A mole trap has two long legs with a spring on top and a bar set with fork-like tines and a trigger in between. Legs of the trap are pushed down to straddle a mole tunnel. Then should Scalop move through the tunnel and strike the trigger, the spring would shoot the tines jabbing right through him, and pinning him to the spot. Thrice Scalop escaped by millimeters being run through by the tines. His short tail still carried the scars of these encounters. Those were old and weak traps.

Now Miss Mathilda had strong new ones. She bought them by the dozens. Each time a plant was cut off, she set a new trap over a tunnel!

Scalop learned to recognize a trap by the odor, and no matter how delicious was the aroma of the worm ahead of him, he made a wide detour of the trap to avoid getting caught. Miss Mathilda made it easy for him for she used a strong hand lotion.

One day the mailman stood looking over the garden. "Why, Miss Mathilda," he teased, "you have almost as many traps as you have petunias. It looks as though you are growing mole traps!" "It does, indeed," said the lady, "but I must catch that murderous mole!"

One day a detour took Scalop into the apple orchard right next to the garden. Here the soil was less friable, there were fewer worms to feed on, but there were no moles to drive away and no mole traps! He could still dig a side tunnel to the base of the bird feeder that hung on the edge of both the garden and the orchard.

Miss Mathilda didn't know Scalop had moved to the orchard. She still lost many plants, for when the mole moved out, many cutworms moved in. When winter came, she pulled up the traps.

Before winter arrived, Scalop dug deep tunnels to escape the frost. His favorite tunnel was the one that led to a spot just below the bird feeder. The careless eating habits of chickadees, Carolina wrens, and titmice sent many suet tidbits down to him. Here he wasn't bothered by hawk or owl even though they were about all winter. He could eat right from his front door. A cat from a nearby farm would crouch, tail a-twitching, in front of his tunnel, waiting for him to come out. She waited in vain. Scalop was always aware of her odor, and he knew by the vibrations even when she was swishing her tail.

Winter is often a difficult time for hungry moles. They do not migrate like swallows, hibernate like chipmunks, nor store away food like the fox squirrel. They can't make tunnels near the surface for the soil is frozen. Anyway, the worms are living now deep in the earth below frost line. But Scalop, so close to the bird feeder, wasn't often too hungry. He didn't have to make the hills other moles have to make!

In the spring he would find another mole and they would build a grass-lined nest. Moles differ from rabbits, rats, or mice in that they have only one family a year. A cottontail rabbit may have five sets of young ones during the warm season.

There is little family life for moles. When Scalop's children became a month old, each would leave the orchard to find a territory of its own. They wouldn't hunt all night and sleep all day as raccoons do, nor sleep all night and hunt all day as hawks do. They would hunt around the clock and around the year. Life, for a mole, is generally a short one. And to be a happy mole — if there is one — life must be just one big endless meal, mostly of worms.



Grouse Don't Play

By RICHARD PAULEY

The grouse season was still in its first week, and a bright November sun warmed the air as my old friend Bill Gibbs and I followed my six-year-old Irish setter, Lady, up a deep hollow. We knew the woods well and had spent many days together in past seasons hunting the area. We had done some pre-season scouting, and had found not only an abundance of grouse, but also a profusion of grouse food. Wild grapes, a favorite of both grouse and turkeys, were unusually abundant, as were dogwood berries and acorns. All of the signs seemed to point toward a fine season for chasing old "Ruff", and our anticipation was reflected in Lady as she began to make game toward the head of the hollow.

"I think she is going to get one up," Bill commented cautiously. Lady was taking smaller steps, and testing the air carefully before moving on, and then my heart fluttered as she slid in on a staunch point at the end of a bleached chestnut log.

Grouse usually don't hold too well under the best conditions, and I didn't want to waste the first point of the season. Bill and I moved in behind the motionless dog, instinctively knowing that the tranquility of the autumn afternoon was about to erupt in a flurry of thundering wings. We got to within 10 yards of Lady, but the unseen bird failed to flush.

"I don't think. . . .", Bill started to say, but the sentence was never finished. The feathered bomb exploded from the far end of the log, and flashed around

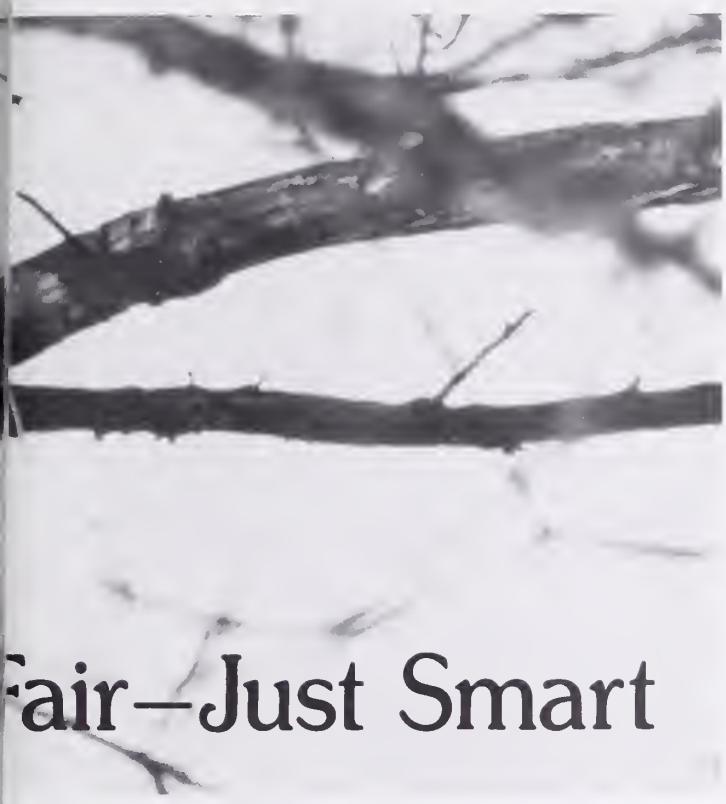
trees as if jet propelled. There was no time for aiming, there never is on grouse, but I swung and fired in the direction the bird had gone. Having done no damage, I was about to fire again when Bill neatly crumpled the escaping grouse with a single shot.

In the next two hours Lady put up four more grouse for us, although none were as cooperative as the first. Bill bagged a wild single, while I got one of a pair that flushed near a spring. We were content with the day's bag, but on the way back down the hollow, Lady again slid into an uneasy point. There was no waiting this time, as the grouse flushed and made an almost vertical climb right in front of me. As grouse shots go, it was an easy one, and I collected my second bird of the day.

"With some more days like this, we could just about limit out this season!" Bill beamed. "I don't know about that." I replied. "I'm not sure anybody has ever brought down 15 of these birds in a single season." "Well it sure gives us something to shoot for anyway doesn't it?" Bill exclaimed.

It always seems that I spend most of the year waiting for November to arrive, and once it does it never lasts long enough. Of course it is easy for time to slip by when your hours are taken up by pursuing deer, wild turkeys, and the other offerings of the season, but even though I enjoyed hunting all the rest, my thoughts kept returning to grouse.

During the remainder of the first week, I was fortunate enough to bag an additional brace of the coveted birds, but with the statewide deer season fast



Fair—Just Smart

Photo LeRue

approaching I felt certain my grouse hunting would have to suffer a setback. However, as luck would have it, noon of the opening day of deer season found me dragging out a fat five-point buck, and I found myself with the rest of the week to chase grouse.

The next morning found me trudging as far back into the brush as possible, hoping to avoid deer hunters and find some undisturbed birds at the same time. I knew the area fairly well, but I wished Lady could have been there to help. However, a red dog running during deer season is courting trouble.

A large outcropping of rock loomed directly in front of me, and hoping to enjoy the view I climbed out on the end to have a look. Before I could even take in the panorama, a grouse rocketed into the air from the base of the rock and sailed out below me. I suffered a brief moment of surprise when the bird folded, but then I always surprise myself a little whenever I hit a grouse. I began a shaky descent from the rock, but before reaching the ground a second bird flushed and got away without even being shot at. I mentally chastised myself, and cautiously eased to the ground. It didn't seem likely that there would be another grouse at the base of the rock but I wanted to be ready just in case. As I peered around the edge of the rock I caught a glimpse of movement and my double barrel snapped to my shoulder. The third grouse was up and away, but I was ready this time and the bird hit the ground not far from the first. I started thinking about getting my third bird of the day, but I wasn't optimistic. I had been in the

same position too many times before, and I knew that third grouse was almost mythical.

I started out around the side of the mountain, hunting slowly and carefully, trying to put gloomy thoughts of misses and other disasters out of my mind. The afternoon slipped away with not a single grouse flushed, and shadows were lengthening as I stopped to rest on a wind-blown ridgeline.

Grapevines hung everywhere, and most still contained countless clusters of the purple fruit. Even though the place was quite steep and rough, two tall pines rose from the side of the ridge providing natural roost sites. The spot was a favorite deer stand of mine, and many evenings I had watched grouse glide off the ridge to feed in the grapevines and later roost in the pines.

I didn't go far before jumping a grouse that I never even saw, so I slowed my pace. I eased through the thicket, hoping to remain ready, but knowing that the flush of a grouse is always disturbing.

A pair of birds flushed directly in front of me, but I fired both barrels without connecting. An empty feeling settled over me as I felt I had missed my last chance of the day. Still moving carefully, I passed the spot where the pair of grouse had flushed when the sound of wings again broke the afternoon stillness. The remaining grouse had allowed me to walk completely past it before flushing, but instead of continuing straight and quickly disappearing, it sailed down the mountain into the open woods. My second shot created a large puff of feathers, and although well hit, the bird's momentum carried it down the ridge. Dusk was upon me when I finally found the third grouse.

By Christmas, my total had climbed to 10 grouse in the freezer, and it became increasingly harder to not think about taking a season's limit. Much of my time during the following few weeks was occupied by duck hunting. The middle of January found the duck season ending, and chest waders were soon exchanged for Lady and my old camouflage hunting jacket.

My first outing after duck season produced a single bird, and the following Saturday two more fell before my unbelieving eyes. It was hard to believe, but my goal was definitely in sight. I even remember having some thoughts of getting my two remaining grouse too soon, and missing some of the season.

In early February the mountains were covered with a heavy blanket of snow. Hunting was unproductive even though we tried hard and often. With but one weekend to go, I needed a single grouse to limit out. I felt with any luck at all I would get another grouse but as any hunter knows, a week is a long time to think about such a task.

At last the epic day arrived, and back into the mountains went Lady and myself. Every serious grouse hunter has a few secret spots of cover that he guards

tenaciously, and I am no exception. Some of these spots have been shared with a few very close friends, but a couple are special and Lady and I hunt them alone.

It was once a cleared field, with a solid cabin standing at one end, all carved out of the side of the mountain. Lady and I hunted the field thoroughly, but no grouse ventured out into the open that morning. Next we concentrated on the pine thickets, but only one twisting, dodging bird was put up, and my shot from a kneeling position was off the mark.

The sun was climbing high when I decided I could do with some cool spring water, and Lady seemed to wag her tail in agreement. Lady was out in front of me, and we started down the hollow toward the spring. Paying little attention to the big red dog, I sat my gun against a tall poplar and proceeded to drink my fill. Suddenly I realized Lady had not joined me. Whirling around, I immediately saw her frozen on point in the thicket below me. I started toward her, but "Ruff" had seen enough and disappeared around the ridge. Lady never faltered, but moved a few steps farther into the laurel thick on quivering legs and locked up again. Another grouse, and then another thundered out of the cover, and I was still too far away to get off a shot. Lady still did not leave the thicket, but began making game a little farther up the ridge. This time I was prepared when she went on point, but I missed an open shot as the grouse made a getaway down the mountain.

"Sorry dog," I mumbled. "If I was doing my part half as well as you are, we would be on the way home by now." We scoured thicket after thicket during the balance of the day, but not another grouse was seen. It was getting late when I decided that I wasn't going to get my last grouse after all. Lady and I headed up the path toward the Jeep.

"Well 14 grouse in a season is nothing to be ashamed of!" I told Lady. Seemingly unimpressed, she continued to gaze out the old mountain road we were driving along, and then something ahead caught my eye. Even in the gathering gloom I knew it was a grouse standing there in the road, and I was not surprised when it showed no fear of the approaching Jeep. The same bird that is so wild and unpredictable out in the woods, becomes almost stupid when it ventures out onto back roads, and are often easy prey for "road hunters." There I was alone, needing but one bird to limit out, and only minutes left in the season. Who would ever have to know?

Lady gave a plaintive whine, but it was soon over and the old Jeep rumbled down the mountain. I've thought a lot about not killing that grouse, but I have never regretted my decision. I think part of the reason I hunt grouse is because I identify with the wild, untamed nature of the bird and its environment. To tarnish something as pure and ideal as that would sure make it hard to face Lady come November.

A Rose by Any



By SANDY DENGLER

Why did they bother to name the striped skunk twice--*Mephitis mephitis*? And the fruit fly called *Drosophila melanogaster* is approximately the size of the letter "i" in its name. *Rhabdammina abyssorum*, a protozoan, can't even be seen without a microscope. The smallest creature fails to escape the lengthy label we call the "scientific name."

Anyone who hunts, fishes, enjoys the outdoors or just raises house plants bumps into them. From the moment we begin studying biology in school those tongue-twisters are there, hiding amongst gentle English words to surprise and vex us. And yet, Latin and Latinized Greek scientific names are not meant to be vexing. They impart order to the natural world, giving each kind of plant and animal a name that is its alone. In fact, at least at one time, they were friendly and familiar to the naturalists who coined them.

Why do biologists use Latin and Greek, anyway? . . . Why not French (the dance employs French) or Italian (the language of opera and music notation) or even English? The origin and development of scientific names is a natural consequence of history, including the history of the early Christian church. It all began 2200 years ago.

Other Name . . .

When Alexander of Macedon mastered the Mediterranean world around 330 B.C. he established his native Greek as the first truly international language. Everybody knew Greek. Even when the Romans annexed the empire around 60 B.C., Greek remained the popular language of business and pleasure. If you lived in Egypt, for instance, you would converse with your dear old mother in Egyptian, pay your taxes to Rome and go to court in Latin and barter with an Idumean merchant or talk to your Syrian girlfriend in Greek. When Pilate ordered the sign for Jesus' cross it was written in three languages: Greek, which everybody spoke; Latin, the language of the state; and Hebrew, the local tongue.

Shortly after 300 A.D. the emperor Constantine made Christianity the accepted religion of the Roman Empire. At the same time a brilliant linguist and scholar named Jerome prepared a version of the Greek and Hebrew scriptures in Latin (the Vulgate version still in use). Furnished with the Holy Scriptures in Latin, the official state church now used the official state language.

Although martial Rome faded, Latin remained alive in the Church and in the universities. The Bible, commentaries, medical texts, herbals, histories, diaries...all were written in Latin. College classes were conducted in Latin. The educated men also mastered Greek, if only to read Aristotle's treatises, but the uneducated; the common folk; rarely bothered to learn anything other than the local dialect. The days of a truly international common language were gone.

"WAS A "BUFFALO" A BISON, A WIZENT, A CAPE BUFFALO OR A CARABAO?"

The tidy Greek-Latin arrangement of the academic world might have rolled comfortably along forever. But the Age of Exploration and Discovery suddenly dumped upon it whole shiploads of exotic plants and animals from all those faraway places. Was a "buffalo" a bison, a wizent, a Cape buffalo or a carabao? By 1600 A.D., taxonomy, the science of naming living things, was in an absolute muddle.

Karl Von Linne, in the mid-1700's, straightened out the mess. He assigned to each kind of plant and animal a generic name to show its similarity with others and a species, or specific, name that no other living thing possesses. He even changed his own name to the Latinized Carolus Linnaeus. To further simplify things,

Von Linne applied standard Latin endings to Greek-based words. He used Latin and Greek simply because he and every other educated man were fluent in them both. To them, *Chenopodium platyphyllum* was just as comfortable and familiar as our "flat-leaved goosefoot."

Today we can stumble around with those perplexing Latin and Greek names, our tongues falling flat in our faces, or we can master them and put them to work for us. And as we become familiar with the root words

"BY 1600 A.D., TAXONOMY, THE SCIENCE OF NAMING LIVING THINGS, WAS IN AN ABSOLUTE MUDDLE."

from which they are coined they begin to make sense. For example, to the Romans (and to Linne) the Latin word *mephitis* meant "a pestilential exhalation;" in other words, extraordinarily bad breath. Now go back and look again at the name given the striped skunk.

Scientific names may honor some botanist or zoologist, but more often they are descriptive of the plant or animal they label. They reflect color, hairiness, geographic area, form or habits. The raccoon so common here is named *Procyon lotor*. *Lotor* in latin means "washer" in the sense of one who washes.

Some names are fanciful, some are applied tongue-in-cheek. Botanists, for instance, refer to tiny desert flowers as "belly-flowers" because you must lie on your stomach to get a good look at them. And in the Southwest grows an inch-high daisy-like annual named *Monoptilon bellidoides*.

Names reveal similarities that are often helpful, or at least interesting. It is no coincidence that snow geese and blues act so much alike; they are so closely related they both carry the common generic name *Chen*. And you just saw that name "chen" a minute ago in "*chenopodium*", "goose-foot." A pod is a foot, as in podiatrist, foot doctor; podium, to stand on; the pods on which the lunar module rested. It all relates, in a fascinating way.

Books and dictionaries can provide the meanings of Greek and Latin roots, helping you to dissect and analyze those blockbuster names. Soon each name takes on a familiarity, a lilt and flavour of its own, no longer strange. To the amazement of both yourself and others you'll be able to glance at *Melospiza melodia* and think, "What a perfect name for a song sparrow!"

Photo Knuth



When It's A FOWI

By SANDRA S. MEADOWS

Occasionally, as happened at our house last season, a good deer hunter doesn't get his deer. I won't go into reasons why, for fear that they might sound too much like wifely recriminations. Suffice it to say that, preferring game to domestic meat, other provisions for meals had to be made.

The alternatives to venison were squirrels, rabbits, and fowl. Squirrel hunting is not the most favored sport at my house, although my boys will consent to bag a few for the freezer, if the issue is forced.

Rabbits were scarce and sickly in Tidewater, Virginia last year. Even before the afore-mentioned hunters had

seen any rabbits, I announced early in the season that I would not cook an animal having tularemia, wolves, or any of the other afflictions the State Game Commission saw fit to warn sportsmen about. I don't care who says they are safe to eat when they are cooked — I'm not eating sick rabbits.

That left winged game and a fowl winter. Fortunately for my food budget, the hunters I am intimately acquainted with will go duck hunting at every opportunity.

Wild ducks are excellent when properly prepared. There are two important things to remember before cooking ducks. First, make sure they haven't been eating fish. If they have, you will be the first to know. Second, please don't soak them in vinegar. In fact, you don't need to soak them in anything. If you feel morally obligated to do so, however, then lightly salted water is sufficient and innocuous.

One duck should feed two people. To roast wild ducks, place them breast side up in a shallow pan. Add a little water, put a piece of celery in each cavity, salt and pepper the birds, and lay a strip of bacon across each one.

For best results, cook the ducks in a browning bag for an hour, at 325° — 350° . If you don't use a bag cook the ducks in a covered pan for an hour, then uncover and cook for another half hour.

When they are done let them cool slightly before slicing. Make a thick brown gravy from the drippings, add sliced mushrooms, and crumble the bacon into the gravy. For a superior meal, serve with wild rice.

Ducks can also be prepared in a pressure cooker. Though the taste is excellent, the meat does not brown

enough to look attractive, and eye appeal is an important part of any meal. For the cook in a hurry, however, use the pressure cooker (it takes about twenty minutes for ducks) and then brown the birds in the oven.

Doves are usually plentiful in Virginia's cornfields, and they make very good eating. When you serve any of the small game birds plan on about four per person.

The best way to cook doves, and other small birds as well is country-style with gravy. To fix birds this way, coat them in flour and brown on all sides. Make a thick gravy and simmer the birds in it for about two hours. Add water as needed. In a pressure cooker this meal takes about fifteen minutes.

Doves and quail can be fried like chicken also, but they must be parboiled first, for twenty to thirty minutes. Or, for a change, make your favorite bar-be-cue sauce and cook them in the oven like spare ribs.

Any time my husband or sons bring doves home, I am too thrilled to worry about what they didn't get, or won't get. Doves are probably the most delicious game birds in all the world!

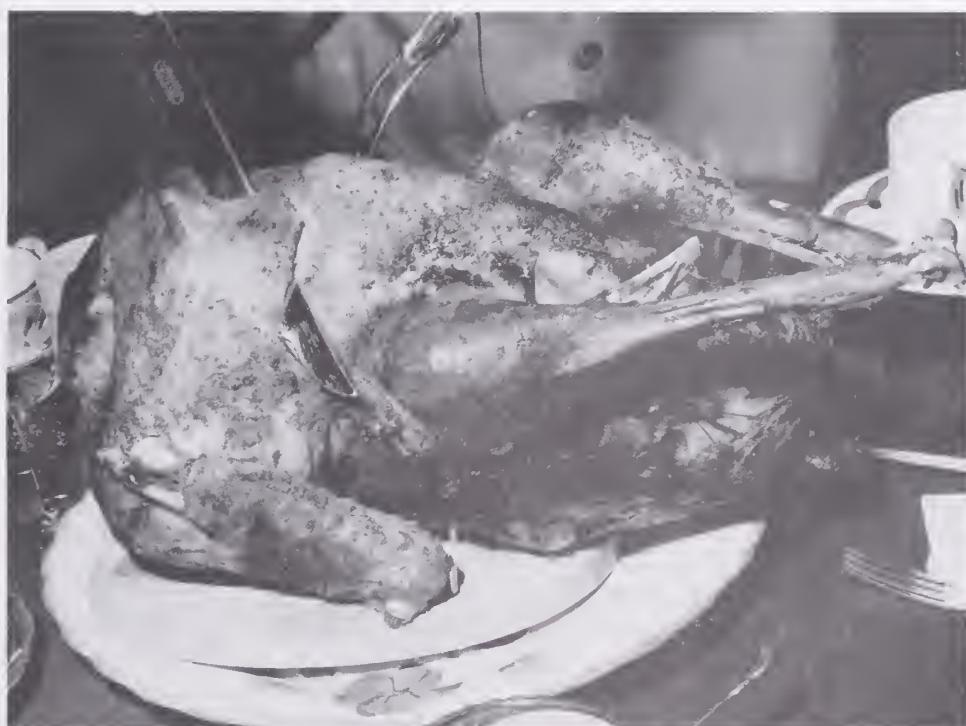
Other possibilities for a fowl winter are turkeys, geese, and pheasants — we should be so lucky.

Whenever possible serve game birds with wild rice. It is costly, but worth every penny. The expense of wild rice can be justified by the fact that the meat which goes with it doesn't come out of the food budget.

I had dreaded a year without our mainstay of venison in the freezer. It wasn't too bad, though, with a couple of venison hindquarters from sympathetic friends, plenty of seafood from summer, and enough fowl to keep life interesting, and the hunters happy.

WINTER

A delicious duck dinner begins after a successful day of waterfowl hunting (Far Left). The follow-up process includes the task of plucking the bird clean of feathers (Left). After preparation and cooking, the end result is a succulent meal (Right).



Personalities

Text and photo by F. N. Satterlee



SERGEANT JAMES WILLIAM SIMPSON

Area Leader Warden, Thomas Jefferson District

In the limestone-belt of Warren County, Virginia, near a United States Post Office with the optimistic name of "Success", Jimmy Simpson was born into a farming family. He grew up in a typical rural atmosphere and, although there was much work to do with the farm chores and all, it was a happy time. He recalls, with twinkling eyes and a nostalgic smile, the time when, while quite young, he sat down on a sleeping pig only to have the animal "explode into life" and in the manner of a western bronco, give the youngster a very interesting ride.

Jimmy's father began teaching the youngster about the outdoors and guns and hunting early on and when he was seven and had shown that he had "learned", he was allowed to go hunting with his dad. The old single-shot .22 rifle that he was permitted to carry on those early hunts still retains a special place in his memory.

His formal education began in a one-room-school in the Rockland area and the remainder took place in the Front Royal, Virginia public school system. For a time he worked in a Rayon Mill in Front Royal. Later he went to work for a well known hardware and building

supply company in Front Royal, and while with that firm, did a variety of jobs.

Since 1938, Jimmy has been an active member of the Front Royal Volunteer Fire Department and, during W.W. II, was Chief Fire Warden for Warren County. Currently, he is President of the Front Royal Volunteer Fire Department.

In May of 1947, Mr. Simpson was accepted for employment as a Game Warden with the Virginia Game Commission. He was assigned to Warren County and, for a time, had additional responsibilities in Clarke County. He is currently Area Leader Warden in charge of Clarke, Frederick and Warren counties, and is President of the State Game Wardens Association.

When Jimmy chose to become a Game Warden, he did so with the idea that it would give him the opportunity to be outdoors and that, as a warden, he could help to perpetuate the game species for future generations to enjoy. He continues to feel that way today, and he feels also that his personal goal, that of helping his fellow man, has largely been fulfilled.

IT APPEARS TO ME...

A Conglomeration of Comments, Cumshaw and Cogitation

BY CURLY



... A PERSON OUGHT TO HAVE ONE!

For all of you tree-lovers the Consumer Information Center in Pueblo, Colorado has a free 26-page booklet published by the Interior Department. It is entitled "Lets Plant a Tree" and the publication outlines the correct instructions for growing trees and even makes some suggestions for youth activities in that regard. The "freebee" is limited to single copies per requestor from Consumer Information Center, Box 278D, Pueblo, Colorado 81009.

I am, and perhaps you are also, a nut about maps. Let it suffice to say that we are not alone as evidenced by the fact that the U. S. Government alone distributes more than FIFTY MILLION maps each year. Trouble has always been in knowing what maps were available. Now that problem has been solved with a free publication entitled quite appropriately, "Types of Maps". Drop a line to: U. S. Geological Survey, National Cartographic Information Center, 507 National Center, Reston, Va. 22092 or call them at 703/860-6045.

One of the more recently published (free) leaflets by the U. S. Geological Survey is the one titled

"Lithium-Nature's Lightest Metal." The leaflet is part of a series of publications (nontechnical) prepared to disseminate information about the environment, natural resources and the earth sciences. Single copies are available at no cost from the U. S. Geological Survey's Branch of Distribution, 1200 South Eads Street, Arlington, Va. 22202.

... FOR YOUR BOOK SHELF

As regular as clock work, for lo these many years, the National Wildlife Federation has published a right handy item called the *Conservation Directory*. In this 230-page booklet are listed the names and addresses of about 9,500 persons involved in the conservation field along with the same information about nearly 1,500 organizations. If you have ever been frustrated when attempting to communicate with some one in the conservation business and didn't know where to turn, this publication is your answer. In the 1977 edition, which is available now, a new section lists the U. S. National Wildlife Refuges by state and it even includes the managers names and phone numbers. This new feature alone makes the \$3.00 postage-paid price worth the cost. To order yours, and be the first kid on the block with all the latest information, send your money to: Conservation Directory, National Wildlife Federation, 1412 16th St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036.

Spiral-bound and specially designed to fit in your hand is a unique publication from Doubleday & Company with the intriguing title of "My Recipes Are For The Birds", written by Irene Cosgrove and illustrated by Ed Crosgrave. This 'winner' will not

only please you cosmetically and practically but it is truly "for the birds." Where else have you seen such ingenious concoctions as "Wren Wrolls", "Waxwing Wedge" or "Grosbeak Goolash". The recipe for the latter reads as follows: $\frac{1}{2}$ Cup sunflower seeds, $\frac{1}{2}$ Cup hamster pellets, $\frac{1}{3}$ Cup dog biscuits, $\frac{1}{4}$ Cup all-bran, $\frac{1}{4}$ Tsp. sand, $\frac{3}{4}$ Cup suet. Put sunflower seeds, hamster pellets, crushed dog biscuits, all-bran and sand into a coconut shell half. Set aside. Put suet through meat grinder and place in double boiler. Melt and set aside to cool and harden slightly. Reheat and while in liquid form pour $\frac{3}{4}$ cup over ingredients in coconut shell. Refrigerate to harden.

This should be a best-seller especially at the \$2.95 price and it is a delight to both read and behold.

AND THEN...

With the new Administration's emphasis on the exploration of energy frontiers it makes sense for me and thee as John (and or Marsha) Q. Public to bone up on just what alternatives are available to us. We have 'gotten wind of', if you will, new research going on with new versions of the time-honored and familiar windmill; and we have heard-tell of some plans to pipe steam from some hot spots down in the earth. Seems like one of the more fascinating options is that of Solar Energy. The Government Printing Office has a publication called "Buying Solar" which lays out some interesting information which you might find useful. Price for the booklet is \$1.85 from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Gov. Printing Office, Washington, D. C. Specify that you want Stock No. 041-018-00120-4.

On The Waterfront

Edited by Capt. Jim Kerrick

EVALUATING A BOAT WITHOUT GOING FOR A RIDE

If you are bound and determined to buy a boat, and you've never owned one before, there are a number of things you can evaluate before you haul out the checkbook right in the showroom without going out for a ride.

Of course, you may want a demonstration ride before you buy, but a quick preliminary study will narrow your choices down to the boats which will be most likely to fill your boating bill. Going in unknowing and unprepared can confuse anyone.

When you walk into the showroom, you probably have at least some vague idea of what you are going to do with your boat once you buy it. When the salesman arrives, let him know what you think you might use it for. Follow his recommendations, but don't accept everything he says as gospel.

One of the best aids you have going for you is common sense. Common sense will tell you a lot about the boat, even though you've never been out on the water before. For instance, if you are a fisherman, you will want an uncluttered boat that's easy to clean, with plenty of room to cast a line, and one which will provide a stable fishing platform. A fisherman would be interested in whether or not the boat has a fish well, a cooler, and perhaps built-in rod racks. The way the boat looks, and whether or not it can go 50 mph is probably of little concern.

On the other hand, if you are a water skier the speed and ride of the boat will become important. You also will be much more concerned about its looks than a fisherman might be. Look for the capacity certificate which all reputable boats exhibit. It will tell you the maximum horsepower and load limits recommended by the manufacturer.

Remember, there is one position which will always be manned when the boat is underway. This is the



helm, whether it involves sitting in the stern and grasping the handle of a tiny outboard engine, or lounging in a foam-padded bucket seat behind an array of fancy instruments. The prime consideration here is comfort and safety.

Get behind the wheel. Does it feel secure? Do you feel as if you have everything well in hand from your position? When you lean back, does it feel comfortable? Or is the wheel too far away? Or too close? How about leg room? When you slide into the seat, does the wheel press down on your thighs? Does the control stick fall readily to hand? When the gearshift and throttle controls are full ahead, or full back, do your knuckles smack the side of the cockpit? Most designers go to great lengths to avoid these occurrences. If they are present, look twice at the boat, even though the salesman assures you it's the deal of the century.

Examine the windshield if your boat has one. Is it good and solid? Or is it just a pretty curved sheet of plastic that will crack the first time any stress is put on it? Does it have a center post? Many boats have some sort of hinged arrangement which allows a person to reach the foredeck by folding part of the windshield back. You'll be amazed at the number of times you have to go forward to secure a line, raise anchor, or cast off. If you don't have a step-through windshield, at least make sure the one you do have is well braced. It's

no fun trying to climb over a flimsy plastic windshield in a pitching boat. Also be sure to check the visibility. Do the posts get in your line of sight? Remember, a boat underway will be at a different angle than one at rest. Look for distortion. You'll be able to check whether it actually keeps spray out when you go for a ride.

Check the fittings. It doesn't matter how many fittings there are. A fine economy model from a reputable manufacturer often has very few. The builder is interested in marketing a superior boat at an economy price, and you outfit it as you wish or can afford. The thing to look for, though, is the quality of the fittings that are there. Do they look flimsy? And, most important, how are they fastened to the hull? An unsafe boat will have them just screwed or glued. You want a boat where the fittings are through-bolted and attached to a backing plate so they won't pull out.

In an outboard boat, the transom will be particularly important. Make sure it is sturdy. Many boats have a transom-well to catch water which might come aboard over the stern. Does the well drain properly when at rest? How about the stern plug? Is it accessible, and will it drain the boat properly?

O.K., satisfied on all these points? There are lots more, but if you're satisfied on these, you've probably got a pretty good boat. Now you're ready for the demonstration ride. It will point out further the boat's good and bad points. Whenever you notice something you don't understand, or if something puzzles you, ask about it. A good salesman will be able to answer your questions most of the time, and he won't think the less of you for displaying unfamiliarity. After all, he'd probably ask you questions about investment banking, or driving a truck, or whatever it is that you do. So ask away. He'll be glad to answer, and in the process you'll learn more about the boat and he'll be better able to see exactly what you want and need.

Bird of the Month

The Field Sparrow



By J. W. Taylor

On sultry, somnolent summer afternoons, the melancholy chant of the field sparrow rings persistently over weedy pastures and brushy clearings. Sleepy, pensive, almost sad, the sound does little to break the spell. One often hears it, without actively noticing it, so much do the notes blend with the lazy mood.

The male begins to sing at daybreak, usually from a prominent stub or bushtop, and continues sporadically the day long, especially if he is not mated or busy with family. Yet, delightfully varied and pleasant of tone, the song never becomes monotonous.

It begins with several slow notes, slurred downwards, followed by an accelerated trill on a higher pitch. Phonetic renderings always inadequately express the quality of bird song, but this comes close: *seeah, seeah, seeah, see, see, see, ee, ee ee ee.*

There are other call notes in addition to this song, the most typical of which is a high "zee-ee-ee". This is the note we hear from the brown fields of winter, where these sparrows gather to glean seeds and other vegetable matter. Sometimes it can be heard at night, tossed down from the autumn sky, as the birds migrate southward.

For the field sparrow is indeed migratory, despite their presence the year round. Wintering birds are not

the same individuals which nested here. Banding studies have shown that, in the southern states, breeding field sparrows move south, to be replaced during the colder months by those which summered farther north.

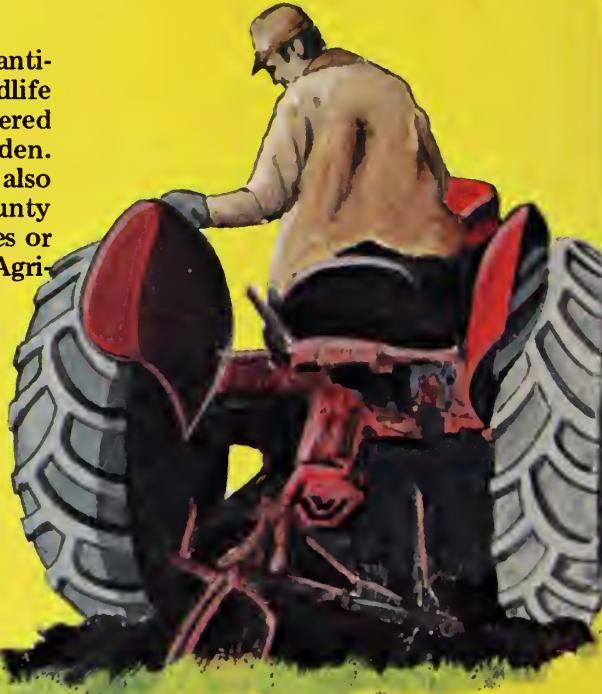
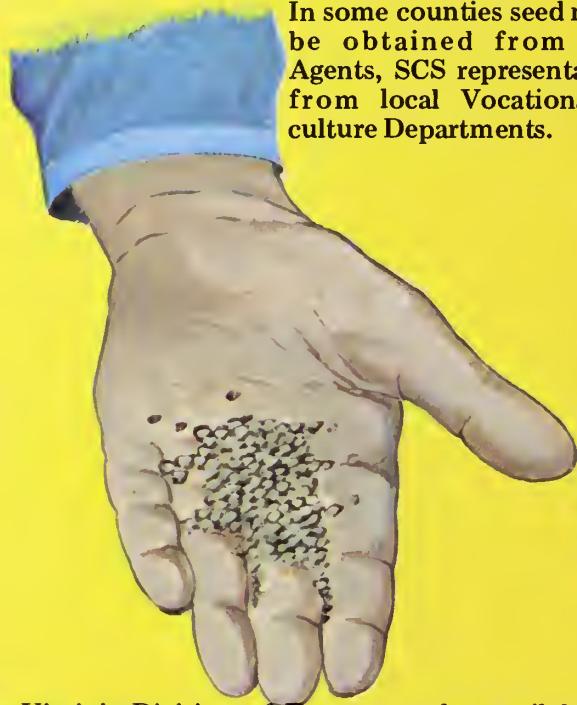
Many novice birders have trouble identifying the field sparrow. They find confusing its resemblance to the tree sparrow and the chipping sparrow, which have the same general coloration and similar red caps. Best points to look for are the pink bill and the white eyering, features belonging only to the field sparrow. The chippy, of course, has the prominent head striping, and the tree sparrow, here only in winter, has a black spot in the center of the breast.

The nesting period is a long one, for field sparrows usually raise more than one brood a season. The first clutch of eggs may be completed by late April, the last set perhaps not until the end of August.

Early nests are placed on the ground, or very low in grassy tufts. Later, when the foliage has filled out, providing cover, higher situations are selected. Rarely are they ever higher than three or four feet. The pale greenish-blue eggs are delicately speckled and blotched with reddish brown.

SPRING PLANTING FOR WILDLIFE

The Virginia Game Commission makes available limited quantities of free seed to landowners for establishing wildlife plantings. These can be ordered from your local Game Warden. In some counties seed may also be obtained from County Agents, SCS representatives or from local Vocational Agriculture Departments.



The Virginia Division of Forestry makes available at nominal cost three species of shrubs attractive to wildlife:

Autumn Olive (\$2.50 per 100 plants)
Bicolor lespedeza (\$2.50 per 100 plants)
Bristly Locust (\$2.50 per 100 plants)
Hardwood tree species also available at varying prices.



Order wildlife shrubs from your nearest District Division of Forestry Office or from the Division of Forestry, PO Box 3758, Charlottesville, 22903.

Remember that land that produces good crops usually produces abundant wildlife.

K. HUTCH